★ ★ ★ WALTON AND RUSSELL—ONE ON ONE ★ ★ ★

BOSTON CELTICS PRIDE

Volume 1, Issue 10
March 10, 1986

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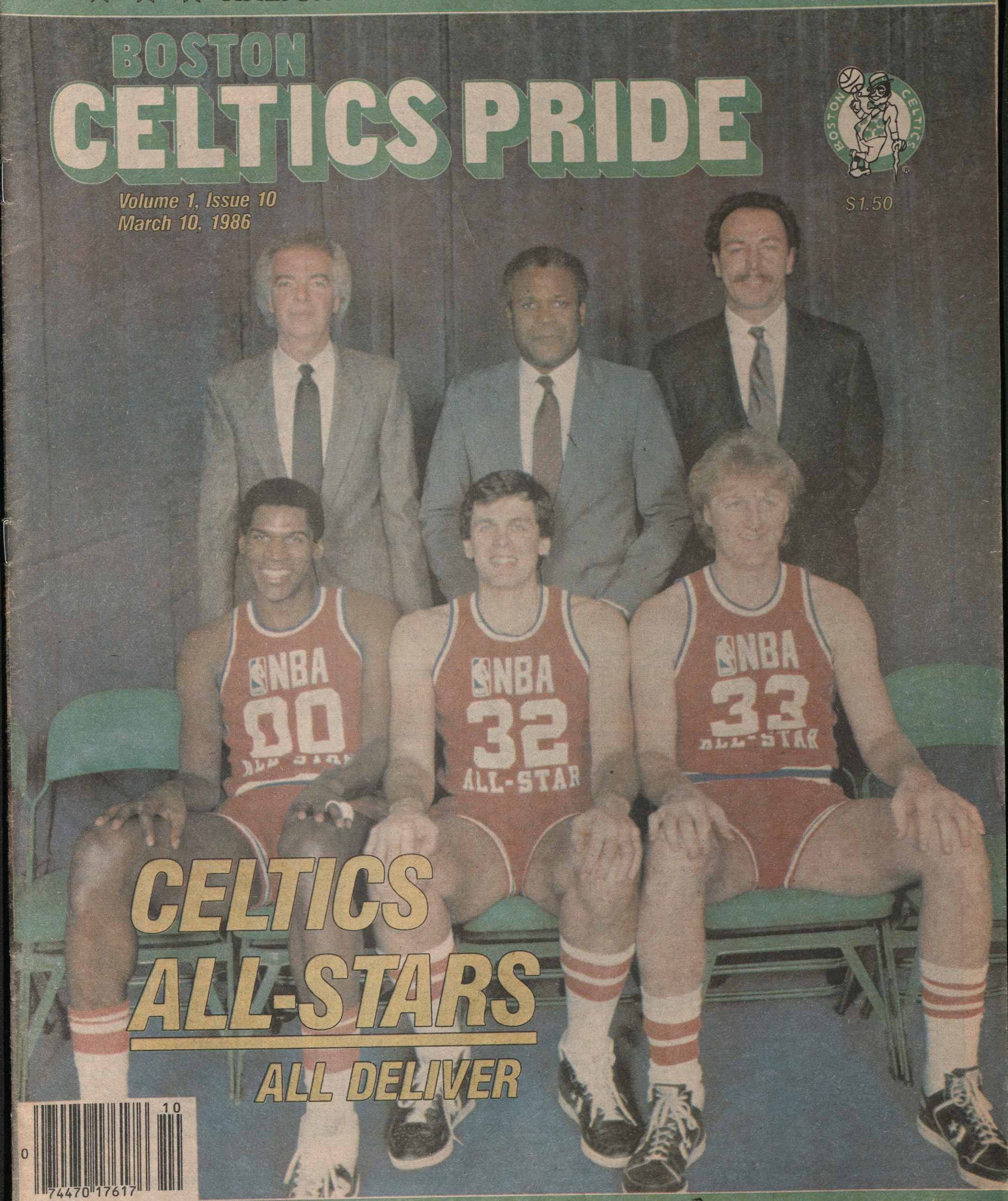

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★ ★ ★ DEFENSE: CELTICS STYLE ★ ★ ★

Larry Bird Named Midas Player of the Month

In a ceremony prior to the Celtics game against the Washington Bullets on Wednesday, February 5th, Larry Bird was named the Midas Player of the Month for the month of January. Presenting Larry with a beautiful clock in the photo above are, from left to right, Stu Siden of WRKO Radio, Jay and Sherri Denenberg of the Danvers, Mass. Midas store, Jay Grebstein of Wells, Rich, Greene, and Michael Wheeler of WRKO Radio.

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MARCH 10, 1986

Cover...

East All-Star Coach K.C. Jones brought his own ammunition to Dallas to defeat the West. K.C. is pictured here with his big guns, Robert Parish, Kevin McHale Larry Bird, Jimmy Rodgers and Chris Ford. Photo by Andy Bernstein.

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Ask Red Auerbach

EDITORS NOTE: "Ask Red Auerbach" is a regular feature of Celtics Pride. If you have a question for Red, please send it to Celtics Pride, 49 Locust Avenue, New Canaan, Connecticut 06840. Red will answer as many as possible in each issue.

QUESTION: Here in Greenfield, Mass. we cannot get Celtics away games now broadcast over channel 56 in Boston or channel 20 out of Connecticut. In the past, we could receive them over Boston's channel 4. Will anything be done next year to allow us to see the games?

Doreen Khan, Greenfield, Ma.

RED'S ANSWER: To start off, let me say that I'm sorry you're not able to see our games this year. We had hoped that one of the benefits of switching to channel 56 would be the expanding of our coverage. We've put all our road games on free TV this year, which we were not able to do in the past, and we also have things in place for a network of local stations to pick up these broadcasts from WLVI-TV (channel 56). I would recommend that if you're not able to pick up the games directly from WLVI on your set, and if you'd like to see the games, you contact your local stations and urge them to make arrangements with WLVI to pick up the feed.

QUESTION: At the beginning of the season, Danny Ainge was used more in the offense than he is now. Why has that changed so much over the season?

Doreen Khan, Greenfield, Ma.

RED'S ANSWER: Well, I don't know that that's changed as much as you may think. Being involved in the offense is not simply a matter of taking shots. Sometimes a fan will look at the boxscore and at the number of shots taken and made and believe that it's an indicator of the player's involvement in the offense, and that's not always the case. Danny's very involved in our offense for a lot of reasons. The fact that he's not shooting as much may be a result of the fact that he shot as well as he did early in the season, which brings the defenses out and allows us to work on our inside game, which is where we tend to dominate. It's not a bad sign at all; in fact, it's an indication that Danny's doing a good job.

QUESTION: Could you please review where the Celtics stand over the next few years with regards to second-round draft picks? In particular, how did the Ray Williams, Jerry Sichting, Quinn Buckner and Sam Vincent deals affect us?

A Fan
Amelia Island, Fla.

RED'S ANSWER: Well, Sam Vincent, of course, was a draft pick, and was not obtained by trade like the others. We did, though, trade a 1988 second-rounder for the chance to move up in last year's draft in order to get a shot at Sam; we gave our first-round pick, which was the 24th pick overall in the draft, to Dallas, plus that 1988 second-rounder, so that we could move up to 20th overall. Ray Williams was acquired from the Knicks for two second-round picks on a contingency basis; had he not signed an offer sheet with someone this year, that would have concluded the deal. But he did sign, with Los Angeles, so we received a draft pick in the future, from the Clippers. Jerry Sichting and Quinn Buckner were actually two separate transactions, but if you look at it in it's totality, it's really only one deal. It works out as Buckner and a future undisclosed to the Pacers for Jerry Sichting. There were some picks that we acquired in between in exchange for Buckner, but they went back to the Pacers when we signed Sichting. To give you an overall review of our second-round picks over the next few years: we don't have ours this year or in 1988, but we do have our own pick in 1987 and in 1989.

QUESTION: What did Dennis Johnson do to receive the two technical fouls that got him ejected from the December 21st game against Philadelphia?

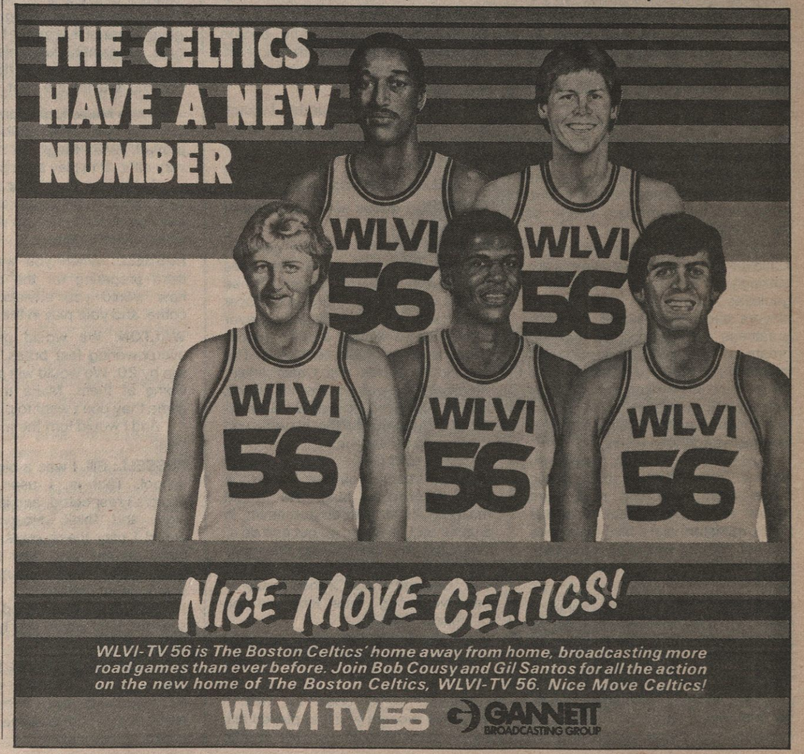
J. Bellamey, Jonesboro, Ill.

RED'S ANSWER: Only Bill Saar, the referee who threw Dennis out, knows for sure, because no one else who was in the area heard anything that would have justified that type of action.

QUESTION: What is the rule in the NBA draft regarding the drafting of juniors and waiting a year for the student to graduate?

Ronald Mercier, Danvers, Ma.

RED'S ANSWER: The rule has changed since we drafted Larry Bird. The rule now is that, regardless of a college player's class standing and when he entered school, if a player has eligibility remaining in the NCAA, he must renounce that eligibility and seek admission into the NBA draft before he would be eligible. Once he renounces his college eligibility, he is no longer able to play college ball. This is called, and not so affectionately I think, the "Larry Bird Rule". That's because we got Larry for the Celtics by drafting him a year before he graduated and then waiting to sign him until after graduation. You can't do that anymore.



Walton and Russell

One on One

Bill Russell, basketball commetator for WTBS, interviewed Celtics Center Bill Walton recently for a feature for NBA Films. The two men are among a select number who have played the position of Center in basketball and have defined it as well. Others include George Mikan, Wilt Chamberlain, Nate Thurmond, Wes Unseld, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Robert Parish, and Moses Malone.

Russell altered the game permanently during his tenure in the pivot for the Celtics. His ability to set the Celtics offense in motion by his singleminded attention to defense transformed the game from stationary offense to fast-break attack. His team and personal accomplishments: 11 team titles, 5 Most Valuable Player awards, 3 1st Team NBA, and in his last season of play, 1968-69, 1st Team All-Defense.

Walton arguably ranks with Russell and Abdul-Jabbar as the greatest collegiate center in history. Walton's UCLA team ran off an unprecedented winning streak of 88; they modeled their attack from the Celts. By overpowering teams on defense, UCLA blazed to easy wins with an intimidating, fastbreaking style. As Russell's teams did in the professional ranks.

Bill Walton did not match Russell's feats in the NBA, because of injury. He has won an NBA title, an MVP, 1st Team NBA, and twice was 1st Team All-Defense. He is a strong contender for Comeback Player of the Year this season.

Ironically, despite the disparity in achievement, these great players are strikingly similar. They are defensive geniuses, perceptive and aware players and men. And, if Russell's greatness relied implicitly on the greatness of the players around him in Boston, Walton's difficulties in his early years in Portland and recently with the Clippers have to be related to his less talented and ego-involved teammates on those teams.

Following are excerpts from the interview, conducted in the Celtics locker room. The two men were seated on stools; Russell wore tan pants, sweater, with a blue turtleneck and hat. Walton was dressed in blue jeans and a purple Grateful Dead T-shirt.

RUSSELL: Bill, there were problems when you first came into the league at Portland. Did you think they would be resolved?

WALTON: I wasn't positive, and for a long time there I wasn't happy. It was the first time I had been out of Los Angeles, and there were problems

Walton: In your face.

Russell: Altered the game.

with some of the players there. But we eventually worked it out. The team traded the players who didn't fit, and we went on to some great successes.

RUSSELL: I've seen some photos and recall you playing with long hair. How accurate was that image of your political beliefs?

WALTON: Pretty accurate. I come from a background of strong liberal Democrats. I still maintain these views today.

RUSSELL: But you cut your hair!

WALTON: I guess so---a process of maturity, I guess.

RUSSELL: Bill, for me, the games I enjoyed the most were the ones against the smartest players. These were a small number. First was Oscar Robertson---I cannot imagine a player who could be smarter or have a more effective array of different skills. The second best was Wilt Chamberlain. Physically, he was on another planet. But besides that, he was 95% smarter than the rest of the players and coaches in the league.

I was glad playing against him for all those years---you see, he was a very determined man. He would make up his mind to do something in a game and he would go out and do it. I was just glad that through the years that those weren't the same things that I decided to do. Or they would've been very long years. How did you do against Wilt?

WALTON: I never played against Wilt. He retired the year I came into the league.

RUSSELL: Time goes by fast; I would've thought you had played him as a rookie...Would you talk a little about your match-up with Kareem?

WALTON: I have a great admiration for Kareem as a player and as a competitor; besides that, he's done a great amount for the game. I love going against Kareem---I love those type of games, with his quality of player. You must rise to the challenge (playing against) the best.

Since Magic (Johnson) has joined him, his play and style have improved. With Magic, it makes him very difficult to play against.

A Kareem is similar to a Larry Bird. Bird's magnitude is derived from skill---pure skill---not as much size, which aids Kareem.

RUSSELL: When you were in Portland preparing for the big games, how would you envision the outcome, and your play in the game?

WALTON: We would generate an overpowering fast break. We would win by 20. We would win going away. Going at them. Make them play a game they don't want to play.

And I would turn the music up, full blast.

RUSSELL: Bill, I was a big imitator in school. That is, I used to watch players I respected, and lay awake at night and think: How physically, would I play these guys. I'd watch, make up my mind how to play vs. them. How I would use my skills vs. an opponent that night.

At UCLA, I watched you...You saw me, how would you have played against me?

WALTON: First I would bring Larry (Bird), Robert (Parish), and Kevin (McHale) with me. Then, I would reach for the ball, turn, drive, and dunk in your face!

RUSSELL: (Extended laughter)

RUSSELL: What do you think separates the great ones from the good ones?

WALTON: The thing I find is you cannot get the great players out of the game. They find a way to produce. The ball is free so much of the time, remember. And they still beat you, the creative great players. The good ones or the ones with 1 skill---you can usually shut these and/or programmed players out.

RUSSELL: I'm going to read a list of names and please give some responses. First Larry Bird.

WALTON: A winner. A contributor...I knew how great a player Larry was watching him from another team. Playing with him, he's even better than that.

RUSSELL: Kevin McHale.

WALTON: The most versatile low post player I've ever seen on the basketball court.

RUSSELL: Robert Parish.

WALTON: A great all-around player. He's been overlooked because of the brilliance of Bird and McHale.

RUSSELL: Akeem Olajuwon.

WALTON: Hard-charging and always running and jumping at you.

RUSSELL: Moses Malone.

WALTON: A short (6-9) center like you, but a muscle player who never stops coming at you.

RUSSELL: Dave Cowens.

WALTON: I really loved playing against Dave. You would smash him and he would smash you back. But nothing dirty, and no complaining from either side. And no crying to the referees. He was also the best position player I ever played against. You could never get him out the correct place.

RUSSELL: Artis Gilmore.

WALTON: The strongest player I've ever faced.

RUSSELL: Jack Ramsey.

WALTON: A great basketball coach who picked up where John Wooden left off.

RUSSELL: Jamaal Wilkes.

WALTON: The best hands---he could catch the world's worst passes. And you knew he would be there in the big games.

RUSSELL: Patrick Ewing.

WALTON: Spectacular and the player who dunked better now than the player of 6-7 years ago. I think Patrick might be getting a little tired down in New York with little help. But destined to be a great one.

Defense! Defense! — Celtics Style

Pat Riley, Coach of the defending NBA champion Los Angeles Lakers, stood outside the visitors' locker room January 22nd, minutes after the Celtics had outplayed the Lakers, winning, 110-95. The Lakers had been bruised and weary, but Riley wouldn't make excuses.

"We got our ----- kicked," Riley admitted. Asked about Bill Walton's performance of seven blocked shots, Riley offered, "It's no surprise to me. I've seen him play that way many, many times."

"What concerns me most is the shooting percentage of our team," he told a reporter. Riley couldn't remember the Lakers shooting as low (.386) as they had shot that night.

"But shooting percentages are down throughout the league. I'm not sure why," the coach pondered.

Statistics reveal that Riley's claim is correct. Of the 23 teams in the NBA, 19 are shooting at a lower percentage than their final shooting percentage of last season. The Lakers shot .545 last year---this season: .519. Of the four teams which are shooting higher, one is the Warriors, who were last in this department last year.

The Celtics, who are shooting .504 this year compared to last season's .508, are among 16 teams whose defenses have improved this year. Their explanation: a superior team defense which has allowed some excellent individual players to take safe risks. Dennis Johnson, Larry Bird, even Robert Parish, are gambling, backed up by a defense combining zone and man to man ideas.

Defense has traditionally been a Celtics forte. From the era of Bill Russell, the Green has summoned defensive intensity both in regular season contests and throughout the playoffs. Russell was a pioneer on defense; he attributed his talent to study, being left-handed (this---because his strongest defensive hand was opposite the usual right-handed offensive player's right hand), his jumping ability, and his team awareness.

Russell's innovations included offense, in addition to defense. The Celtics ran off of Russell's blocked shots and defensive rebounds. But if Russell created the defensive impetus thirty seasons ago, the present day Celtics continue the defensive emphasis. Conditions have changed; in 1956-57, Russell's first season, Paul Arizin of the Philadelphia warriors won the scoring championship with a 25.6 scoring average, shooting .422. The 20th leading scorer last season---Kareem Abdul-Jabbar---averaged 22.0 ppg at a .599 clip. Jeff Ruland failed to place among the leading scorers, but shot .569.

Professional basketball's athletes are bigger, faster, and run more comprehensive offenses than 30 years ago; although Tom "Satch" Sanders insists the game was as good in his time as it is now. Sanders thinks that players were forced to understand the team game better because they didn't have overwhelming individual skill. Yes, but this does not explain how today's defenses have improved. How do defenses stop offensive plans which employ superior athletes in well-conceived offenses?

Some of the Celtics discussed their thoughts. Team defense coordinates individual talents into an overall team plan. For example, guards may play aggressive defense when Manute Bol or Bill Walton is behind them. According to Walton, a key to blocking shots is not even thinking about rejections.

"I try to make the guys miss all the time. (I want to) force them into positions where I cut off all of their options. They lose patience, run out of time, and then they think you're not going to be there. Their options are gone and I'll have the block. I'll try to tip it, not knock it out of bounds," commented the two-time All-Defensive Center.

Much of the Walton defensive game is position and will. Many of his blocks, he observes, come from players other than the man he is guarding. "When you're playing defense, you switch and the thing you try and do is quickly make them in an uncomfortable position. You think to yourself: 'Force that player into a bad shot.'"

"Wait, wait, and then that player will bring it back into you. That's when you have the block."

The team defense on the Celtics helps too. "Our players have excellent rotation, and anticipation. Players like DJ (Dennis Johnson) and Larry (Bird) have the ability to either steal passes or force their man into defensive traps down low. That's when the options run out."

Two superior defensive forwards on the team are Kevin McHale and Scott Wedman. Walton feels McHale is among the best he's seen at blocking his **own** man's shot. "Kevin catches people by surprise. He's able to jump very quickly off his toes with arms extended in a wide wing span. It's difficult to get a read on him because his whole jump's from his lower legs.

"I depend on anticipation, knowing my opponent's moves, and scouting reports," claims McHale.

Wedman bore the brunt of the defensive load while playing small forward at Kansas City (2nd Team All Defense). If Walton is an anchor of a team defense and McHale an intimidating rejector, Wedman approaches defense in constant awareness.

"I try to watch my man and whoever has the ball; I make myself part of a triangle, trying to be in the area between the ball and my man, but still be in a position to help."

Wedman's toughest foes? "Larry Bird is the best player I've seen and I play him in practice. Most players will be able to do two things in the few seconds he has the ball. Bird can do many more than two. Bernard King is tough because of the quickness of his shot, and Adrian Dantley is deceptive and strong inside."

Dennis Johnson ranks with K.C. Jones as the two best defensive guards in the club's history. "I won't say who my toughest foes are because then the others would get mad and score. Everybody in the NBA is that exceptional."

Johnson has consistently thought that the keys to defense often occur away from the ball. He is constantly running through picks away from the ball as his man tries to break away.

"In man-to-man situations, I'll want to play him face-to-face, at arms' length, and in the end, extremely hard."

Boston incorporates these individual approaches into a team defensive scheme. The mastermind: Jones, now coaches the team in his 3rd year. Jones counted down at least four basic defenses; a **hard** defense is pressure on the guard, a **soft** defense sags in the center, **double** means 2-teaming designated players, and **trap** defense pressures full or half-court.

"These are the basic ideas, but there are variations because your opponent will adjust 4 or 5 times a game. So we repeatedly change-up."

Not only does the approach change, but the look is different at times on each side of the court. Pro offenses often desire the pick-and-roll offense. So the Celtics might try to push the ball-handler to the sideline away from his teammate. That is **hard**; meanwhile, on the other side of the floor, the remaining Celtics on the court will play **soft**, sagging in to help out.

The scheme is effective in Boston because, as Walton claims, the Celtics (like DJ, Bird) play with defensive readiness. As Walton and Parish now play together, even Parish has gambled more on steals, knowing the help and team defense is integrated.

The talents in the league have grown on offense; to match them, the defense has evolved on an individual and team level.

"It's still the constant you bring with you each night," offers Johnson. "You might miss on offense, but the work of defense can ideally be done, every night.

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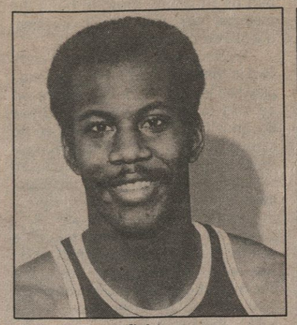
Innerview

Kermit Washington

Kermit Washington was the prototype power forward during the nine-year tenure in the NBA. Big and strong, there was nothing fancy about Washington's game. He willingly went about his appointed rounds of setting picks, grabbing rebounds, boxing out on the boards and playing defense – the sort of things that aren't noticed but are so important to a team's success.

A number-one pick of the Los Angeles Lakers in 1973, Washington stayed with the Lakers until early in the 1977-78 season, when he was traded to the Celtics.

The season was marred by the tragic fight with Rudy Tomjanovich, which earned Washington a heavy fine and suspension. But Washington was able to pick up his career in Boston. In 32 games with the Celtics in '77-78, Washington averaged 11.8 points and 10.1 rebounds a game.



Kermit: Tragic fight

After that season, he moved to the San Diego Clippers, and immediately became one of the most well-liked athletes in the city. When the Clippers signed Bill Walton as a free-agent, Washington was sent to the Portland Trail Blazers as compensation. Washington stayed with the Blazers until his retirement during the 1981-82 season.

After a couple of years away from the game, Washington has resurfaced as an assistant coach at Stanford. Celtics Pride had a chance to chat with Washington recently...

CELTICS PRIDE: How did you wind up with an assistant coach's job at Stanford?

WASHINGTON: Tom Davis, the Stanford coach, was an assistant at American University when I played there. I had moved to San Diego after I'd retired. I got bored and was doing things I didn't want to do. I wanted to see if I'd like coaching. I wanted to be around athletes -- I was comfortable around them and had been around them all my life.

So I called Tom and asked if he'd have an opening for next season, and he did.

CELTICS PRIDE: Why college basketball as opposed to the pros?

WASHINGTON: I wanted to see what college basketball was like. I hadn't been around it for so long. It was important for me to find other things I could do. I didn't like the travel of pro basketball -- I didn't like it when I was playing.

The pressure of pro ball is immense. The immediacy--you have to get better now, you've got to improve now.

CELTICS PRIDE: Stanford is one of the best universities in the country, and even the defensive tackles and point guards are expected to go to class, right?

WASHINGTON: One thing you learn immediately about Stanford is academics is king, sports are secondary. They never compromise academics for sports. That makes it tough to compete with other schools, which take just athletes as opposed to student/athletes.

We don't have a problem with kids graduating. There are no easy courses here--there's no place to hide. There's no kidding around, and athletes don't get preferential treatment. If anything,, they're watched more closely than other students.

CELTICS PRIDE: Do the rigid academic standards make it tough to find good athletes?

WASHINGTON: Ninety-nine percent of the athletes are knocked out right away. We have to find guys through recruiting magazines and check their grades. It they don't have them, it would be a waste of time.

When you go to a house, you stress academics more than athletics. Most people's careers in organized ball end when they're 21 -- you still have 40 years to live.

CELTICS PRIDE: Stanford is doing pretty well in the Pac-10 this year. How is the school able to compete with other conference schools, whose academic standards aren't as high.

WASHINGTON: We do compete, but not always that well. But we're competitive--we don't get blown out by 20 points. We had a tough preseason schedule, which included North Carolina, UNLV, Richmond, Seton Hall and Fordham.

CELTICS PRIDE: You were able to get a degree from American U., yet excel in basketball at the same time, How did you manage that?

WASHINGTON: I didn't become a good student until college-- I was in a different environment, In high school, I wasn't around people who worked hard at academics. In college, I was around people who did.

CELTICS PRIDE: What do you think can be done to bring some sanity to college sports?

WASHINGTON: I don't think sports have ever been sane. We're all chasing the illusion of being the best--everybody wants to be the best. It's not a matter of whether you win or lose, but how you play the game. The nature of the human being is to want to win.

CELTICS PRIDE: And sometimes, at the cost of compromising integrity, academic or otherwise?

WASHINGTON: Stanford would lose a lot of money (from alumni) if we put an emphasis on sports and let academics suffer. Our kids are all straight-A students, and have been since they started school. They don't know anything else.

The school doesn't give anybody any breaks. You either make it or you don't. That's good and bad. There's no chance of anybody coming in and becoming a good student.

CELTICS PRIDE: What do you think about the recent NCAA ruling, which stipulates certain standardized test scores to gain a scholarship?

WASHINGTON: It's silly. It discriminates against minorities. They don't have a fair chance in the beginning, and placing more restrictions on them isn't fair. They should be given the same chance as the kid in the suburbs.

CELTICS PRIDE: Final Question: Do you have any aspirations of being a pro coach?

WASHINGTON: I don't know. My mind changes everyday. But right now, as long as I'm staying busy, I'm happy.

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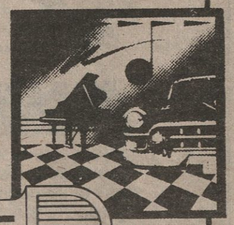

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Celtics Diary

Danny Ainge: Up and Down

Danny Ainge is among the most respected off-guards in the NBA. He's 6-5, blurringly quick and agile, a clutch shooter, a surprising rebounder, and a resilient leader. This is a player once called by Jack McMahon, Scout of the Sixers, "the Larry Bird of guards." The Brigham Young All-American was compared to Doug Collins by Celtics scouts in 1981 and he seemed to affirm these laudatory descriptions with a sterling senior season, a year he brought the Cougars to the Final Four.

Ainge's career was destined for happy and sad times, however. He struggled in Major League Baseball and was the subject of a bitter court case between Boston and the baseball Toronto Blue Jays. Bill Fitch forced him early as a rookie and when he finally found himself in Fitch's system, the coach was gone to Houston.

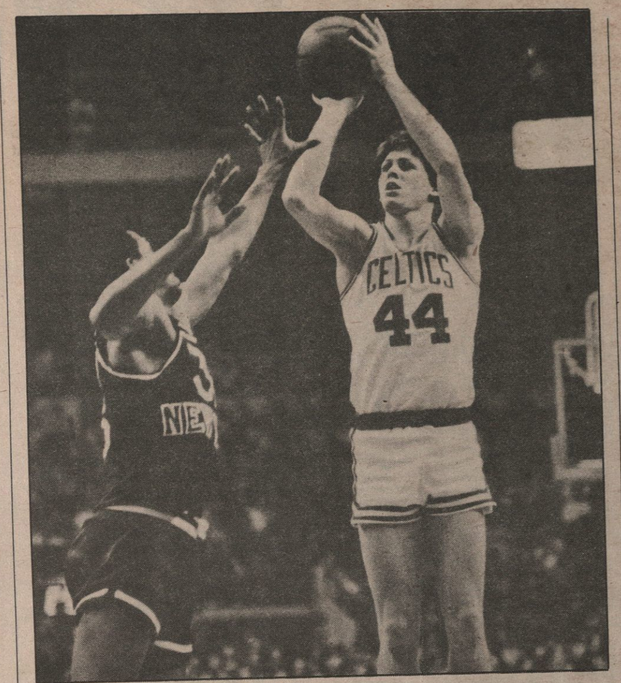
Until Gerald Henderson was traded before last season, Ainge was at times buried on K.C. Jones' bench. One of the most memorable performances was a vital one: critical jump shots in Game 7 in the Celtics title victory in 1984.

Ainge averaged 12.9 ppg last season and has remained in double figures this season (11.6 ppg) despite taking over more of the ball-handling responsibilities. Last season some of his best efforts came in the playoffs. He is beginning to look slowly toward this time again as his impressions were recorded for **Celtics Pride.**

January 30. Chicago. We did not play well tonight here, but as you must do in the playoffs---way down the road---we dug down on defense and pulled out the victory. Most of our scoring comes from the front court but this is looking a little different with Kevin out of there. With Bill Walton playing more of a role off the bench, we are more of a defensive-minded unit. I am concentrating on team defense; tonight I had three steals and the team had 14, along with 4 blocks. But my shooting's been off.

January 31. Washington. We played one of our best games of the year tonight, rushing past the Bullets here. My offensive night was considerably more productive, 10 points and 9 assists. I'll try to create the play on offense, although with DJ's talent on the offensive end, we don't take any assigned roles. The Bullets usually try to control the tempo against us, but Robert, Larry, and Scotty played so effectively up front, they were never really in the ball game.

February 2. Boston. We defeated the Sonics at home, but we had to rally from 21 points behind to do it. I don't know why we have fallen behind so often this year; I like to think our defense is so strong that teams will only get a certain number of points, anyway. But we definitely accept the challenge when we're behind. I was in foul trouble early and later fouled out. But our bench is more confident, and more reliable this year. David Thirdkill played real well today, and Bill Walton has been an important addition all season.



Danny: Wants his shot back for playoffs

I tease Bill; we used to watch him when I grew up in the Portland area during the mid-seventies and watched him lead the Trail Blazers to the title in 1977. I call it "ancient history!" But it's all in fun. Walton's play inspired **everybody** in the Pacific Northwest those years. When he went through those injuries, people up there suffered with him.

February 3. Boston. We go out to Milwaukee tomorrow night; they always play us tough with an area man-to-man defense and several in-between size players. Their backcourt (Moncrief, Pressey, Craig Hodges, Ricky Pierce) are physical and basketball-talented.

We ran through a light workout, including some of the Bucks' plays. Later, we played some informal games, and I played one-on-one with Sam Vincent. He's a rookie and a good-looking young guard who's going to help us. I think he gets a little down, frustrated maybe because of a lack of playing time. I know exactly what that was, having sat much of my third year. You have to be mentally strong in the pro game. There's no escaping the fact.

Later, Larry was practicing for the three-point contest which will be in Dallas later this week. I believe he'll win---he doesn't have to jump for his shots, and he's always focusing on the goal.

February 5. Boston. We defeated the Bullets tonight after playing very well in Milwaukee last night. We have won 13 in a row; in both games we held the opponent to below 100 points. I can't recall our team playing better defense since I've been here.

We do have several games on the road after the break, and this will make it difficult to win every one. But the streak reflects how well the bench has contributed: Wedman, Jerry Sichting, Walton. We have played raggedly in some of the games in the streak (Atlanta, Seattle); but there have been high points: Washington twice, and last night against Milwaukee. For three quarters we were virtually perfect. When you get that high, you do begin thinking about it a little.

The All-Star break comes up now and I'm looking forward to the time off. I enjoy the time between games with my wife Michelle and my family. They're really what you play for; we have enjoyed Boston since I've been playing here and I'm certainly pleased about having my contract squared away.

But I'm going to Phoenix for the break. I'm playing golf in a foursome out there and I fully expect to win.

It'll be fun going on a break having won 13 straight. Tonight the Bullets stayed in the game by controlling the tempo. The strategy is to slow the pace down, take the good shot, and then get you to be impatient with your offense. But our defense has enabled us to sustain our concentration. We won going away.

February 12. Seattle. We arrived here yesterday afternoon, a day after our streak ended in Sacramento. Last year we began the second half of the year in Portland, and the Trail Blazers smoked us. Last night the scene played out again---we were sluggish, turned the ball over frequently, and when we looked up, we were down 81-60.

Uh-oh.

We missed a lot of easy shots and we lost our purpose, it seemed. With it all, we avoided the blowout situation we had in Portland last year. DJ, Larry, and Robert pulled us back into the game. We've come back often this year; when we cut their lead to 13 with four minutes to play, we knew were in it.

It wasn't in the cards. We packed all our intensity into the final 6½ minutes of a ballgame and we really didn't have enough to climb out of the trench we had deepened for ourselves.

My shooting has been uneven (1-9 last night); I haven't felt really right, or perfectly fit, since I sprained my ankle in Indiana. Injuries happen during the season---you have to recover, and pick one another up as a team. We'll miss McHale, and our play won't reach its consistent level if he is out for a long period of time. But we won't want to rush him either; he's too important for our playoff chances. This is a challenging trip; losing Kevin for a long period of time is worse than one or two regular season game losses. Considerably worse.

But I enjoy traveling, especially out here. We go to Portland tomorrow and it'll be fun playing in front of my old home crowd. That playing situation reminds you of your origins---I began things in Portland and I feel I've been blessed as I moved on from there.

All-Star '86 Celebration

A Distinct Celtics Flavor

By Tony Cooper

The NBA's annual All-Star game has always had a distinct Boston Celtics flavor to it. After all, the inaugural game was staged at the Garden way back in 1951, and Celtics Ed Macauley was named Most Valuable Player.

A Celtic didn't capture that honor in the recent game at Dallas' Reunion Arena. Detroit Piston guard Isiah Thomas was MVP, and deservedly so, as his 30 points, 10 assists and 5 steals triggered a 139-132 win for the Eastern Conference.

"He earned the MVP award all the way," Celtics forward Larry Bird said.

Indeed, but the Easterners had plenty of support from the green-and-whites. Three Celtics were on the roster-- Bird, center Robert Parish and forward/center Kevin McHale.

Bird, who has been a starter in every All-Star tilt since he came to the NBA in 1979, played 35 minutes, was 8 of 18 from the field, 5 of 6 from the line, scored 23 points, grabbed 10 rebounds and handed out five assists. Not a bad afternoon's work.

McHale has been bothered by a sore left achilles tendon was expected to make only a cameo appearance. But the challenge of this contest was to great for McHale to pass up. McHale played 20 minutes giving the East 8 points and 13 rebounds.

"He was itching to play and we needed him," said East Coach K.C. Jones, who's also the C's bossman.

McHale's injury has kept him out of action for several regular season matches. And it's quite obvious he isn't 100 percent yet.

"I got really tired," McHale said. "The achilles tendon tightened up. It hurt. I guess I'm gonna have to deal with it the rest of the year."

Parish, who has been playing as well as any center in the league outside of Houston's Akeem Olajuwon, was on the floor just seven minutes. His final stat sheet totals read no points and one rebound in a scant seven minutes.

"Robert told me just give him a few minutes and let the younger guys play," Jones said.

The three Celtics representatives all have impressive All-Star game histories. Bird had a 13.2 point average in six previous classics to go along with a rebound norm of 8.3 a game. The forward scored 21 points and had eight rebounds a year ago. When he was MVP in 1982, Bird had 19 points, 12 rebounds and 5 assists.

Believe it or not this marked only the second time McHale has been named to the squad. Although McHale has long been recognized as one of the premier power players in the league, the abundance of talented forwards in the NBA necessitates that someone be left out in the cold every year. McHale had 10 points and five rebounds two years ago.

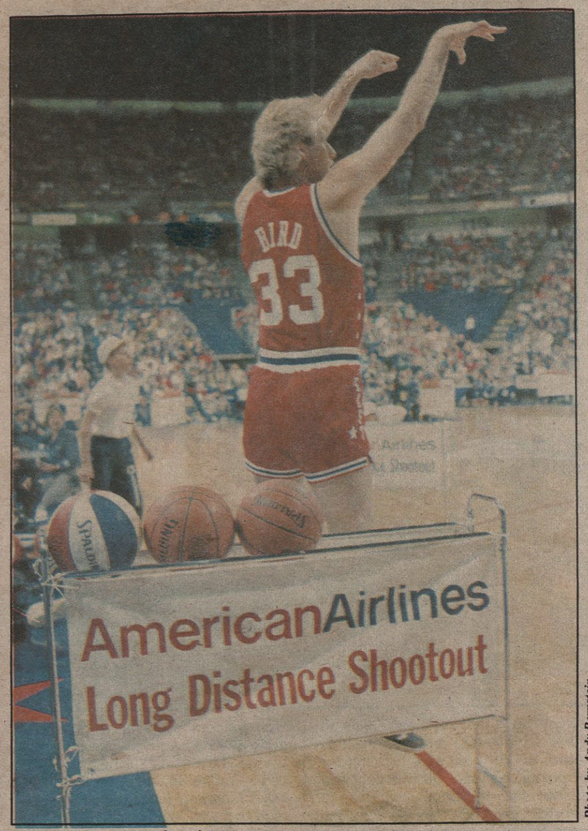


Photo by Andy Bernstein

Larry Bird put on a show in two events

When Parish was tabbed an All-Star, it marked the sixth straight year he has been so honored. His lifetime average (before Dallas) read 13.2 points and 8.2 caroms.

The actual All-Star game was the culmination of the NBA's All-Star weekend, which included a slam dunk contest, a legends game featuring former NBA greats and a three-point shooting contest. The latter was being done for the first time.

Atlanta's 5-7 guard, Spud Webb, shocked the world by coming away with the slam dunk contest. But who captured three-point shooting honors wasn't nearly as surprising.

It was none other than Larry Bird himself.

"I'm the king of three-point shooters," Bird said after the competition. "I always thought I was and I proved it."

Oddly enough, while Bird has hit many an extra-point bomb during pressure situations in regular games, his overall three-point shooting history isn't all that impressive. He made seven of 25 bombs last year-- a .280 percentage, and has a career mark of .307 (23-75).

But Bird is one of those types who thrives on challenges and competition. And when the contest came around, he was ready.

Bird sank 18 of 25 three-point shots in the one minute of the finals against Milwaukee guard Craig Hodges. Bird was credited with 22 points because he made four shots with balls that counted two points...

Hodges scored 25 points in the first round, but was no match for Bird in the finals, coming up with just 12 points. New York Knick guard Trent Tucker had 19 points and Dallas Maverick forward Dale Ellis put in 17 to advance to the semi-finals along with Bird and Hodges.

"I thought if I could get through the first round I could find the rhythm," said Bird, who had 16 points in the first round. "I'm so excited that I'll probably shoot three-pointers all day tomorrow."

For Bird, that's not hyperbole, either. Despite his greatness, Bird is blue-collar all the way, a fellow not adverse to putting in extra shooting after practice or engaging in a pick-up game with teammates.

Fellow Celtics were razzing Bird in the weeks before the shooting competition, which launched him into a two-week practice regimen in preparation for the bombing affair.

"My teammates got me fired up by saying I didn't have a chance." And Hodges didn't have a chance against Bird in the finals. Whereas Bird was well-rested, Hodges was pooped after engaging in two 24-second shootouts to eliminate Ellis.

"He was tired and I knew he couldn't do what he did in the first round," Bird said. "I knew if I got past the first round, I could get into a rhythm. It also helped that I was shooting set shots and he was shooting jumpers."

Bird thought the real action was with the jump shooters, not the skywalkers.

"This is where the real athletes were," he said. "Anybody can dunk, but not everybody can shoot three-pointers."

Bird can. Pretty well.

"Leon Wood (of the Washington Bullets) might be the best three-point shooter in the league, but I kept telling him what a slump he's been in," Bird said. "I told all of the guys before the contest who was going to win. I just wanted to know who was going to come in second. I went up to Craig and told him he had a good chance for second."

Bird didn't leave his offense at the three-point contest, turning in a stellar showing at the All-Star game as well. When it was all over, Bird was one chipper person.

I really enjoyed myself this weekend, more than I ever have before," Bird said. "The people here did a great job. A lot of excitement was created around here. I'd hate to be the guy next in line to have to top this."

Next year's bash is slated for Seattle. And who knows? If Bird's teammates start getting on his case about his lack of jumping ability, maybe he'll start practicing slams and come out and win next year's slam dunk contest.

Celtics History of All-Star Competition

The outstanding performances of K.C. Jones, Larry Bird, and Kevin McHale in this year's All-Star Game, February 9th in Dallas, were another chapter of outstanding play by the Green in these contests. Colorful and outstanding play. In victory, Ed Macauley won the MVP of the first contest and Bob Cousy and Bill Sharman sparked comeback victories in the Sixth and Seventh Classics in the old Madison Square Garden in New York. In another East victory in Boston in 1964, the players almost went out on strike before the game---led by Tommy Heinsohn.

In defeat, Red Auerbach became the only Coach ejected from the Star Game---in 1967 in San Francisco, one season after he retired from the bench.

But these are subplots to the major theme; the C's have won games and MVPs for the East Team. Following are highlights of Celtics performances in the 36-year old event.

1951 The idea of the All-Star Game belonged to NBA publicist Haskell Cohen and Celtics owner Walter Brown. The first game was played in Boston Garden; before over 10,000 fans, Macauley won the MVP by shutting down West center and star, George Mikan. Macauley added 20 points and 6 rebounds as the East won, 111-94.

1954 The East won in overtime, 98-93, and guard Bob Cousy took over the contest in the extra session. He shattered the 84-84 deadlock with 10 points in the OT, capping a 20-point, 11-rebound, 4 assist effort.

1955 In New York, Sharman sparked the East, which trailed 71-70 after three quarters. The 6-1 guard scored 10 of his 15 points in the 4th quarter, scoring on 5-10 from the field and (naturally) 5 of 5 from the FT stripe. Cousy, Sharman, and Macauley represented Boston; Cousy led all scorers with 20 points.

1957 Red Auerbach's coaching debut was a successful one, a 109-97 East triumph in the Boston Garden. A highlight: a 70-foot pass from Sharman intended for Cousy flew over the Cooz's head and into the basket.

1958 Cousy was again the hero, scoring nine in the 4th quarter to break open a 92-91 East led game. Bill Russell (11 points, 11 rebounds) made his first appearance, and Sharman also played. Auerbach coached as the East triumphed, 130-118.

1963 Probably Boston's first real encounter with Los Angeles-style hype. The game, played in the L.A. Sports Arena, was advertised as a certain West win; the West started 6-11 Walt Bellamy, 6-9 Bob Pettit, and 7-2

Larry was brilliant

Wilt Chamberlain on the frontline, with Jerry West and Elgin Baylor in the backcourt. This, and the attendent hype incensed Auerbach and his star Russell. Russ won MVP with 24-rebound, 19-point performance in 115-108 East win.

1967 Auerbach returned from retirement to coach the Eastern stars and promptly ran into a Rick Barry avalanche of long jump shots in San Francisco. Barry scored 38 as the West won, 135-120. In the 3rd period, Auerbach was ejected for arguing.

1968 In an East 144-124 win in New York, John Havlicek led the game in scoring with 26.

1973 Dave Cowens, who was to win league honors later that season, took All-Star game MVP accolades with a 15-point, 13-rebound performance. Havlicek and Jo Jo White also played for Boston. For the second straight season, coaches were Heinsohn from the Celtics and Bill Sharman, then coaching the Los Angeles Lakers.

1976 Cowens, who averaged 12.7 ppg and 13.5 rebounds in All-Star games, sparked the East to 123-109 victory. Dave Bing, who was to end his career with Boston two seasons later, was game MVP with 16-point second half.

1978 Havlicek played his final All-Star game and played masterfully, shooting 5-8 from the field in 22 minutes. Cowens also made his final appearance in the classic and pulled down 14 more rebounds as the East won in Atlanta, 133-125. Starting center for the West: Bill Walton of the Trail Blazers, who finished with 15 points, 10 rebounds, and 2 blocked shots.

1980 Rookie Bird sparked the East to a 144-136 OT triumph. In a game which had featured individual play for the past four years, Bird imprinted it with passing (7 assists). Bird also scored the game's first 3-point field goal, which proved to be a harbinger of his 1986 3-Point Field Goal Contest win.

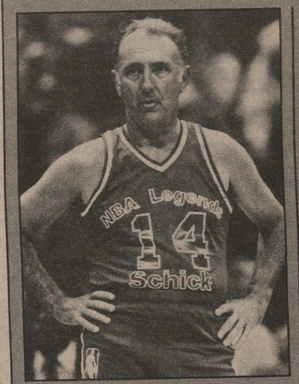
1981 Six-time All-Star Tiny Archibald capped his Star career with MVP award; he scored 9 with 9 assists and commanding playmaking as the East edged the West, 123-120. Robert Parish joined Archibald and Bird and in the first of fine performances, scored 16 and pulled down 10 rebounds. The West high scorers: former Celtics Paul Westphal of Seattle with 19---and Dennis Johnson of Phoenix, also with 19.

1982 In typical clutch performance, Larry Bird scored 12 of his 19 points in final 6½ minutes to key 120-118 East win. Bill Fitch coached the East, Archibald started, and Parish scored 21 with 7 rebounds.

1984 K.C. Jones made his second coaching appearance and his first since returning to the Celtics as Coach in 1983. East triumphed, 154-145, as Parish again starred with 12 points and 15 rebounds. McHale earned a position on the team, unique as the forward was playing off the bench as the Celtics 6th man that season.

1986 East won tightly contested game, 139-132, in Dallas as Jones made his 3rd consecutive coaching appearance. Bird was brilliant with 23 points, 8-rebounds, 5 assists, and 5 steals (including two more 3-point field goals). McHale, playing injured, scored 8 with 10 rebounds and 4 blocks.

Celtics Dominate Legends



Bob took it seriously

Boston Celtics guard Bob Cousy had an off game the other night. He missed all five of his field goal attempts and failed to score a single point.

What's that? You say Cousy has been retired for more than two decades? Maybe so, but he, along with several other one-time NBA greats broke out the shorts for the league's oldtimers' game, one of the preludes to the All-Star clash.

The game, won by the West, 53-44, drew a sellout crowd of 17,007 at Dallas' Reunion Arena. Calvin Murphy and Zelmo Beaty led the West with nine points apiece, and Oscar Robertson added seven.

The Eastern squad, which featured six former Celtics, not to mention Bill Russell, who coached the team, got 15 points from Pete Maravich. Pistol Pete can still fire away, obviously.

"This is sure a Celtics lineup," said John Havlicek, who had five points. "I played with them all."

Tom Sanders, now on the Northeastern University faculty, played with all the old Celtics, save Maravich. He did play against Maravich, however.

"It's funny, you talk about pro ball, you look at the distance in time and you wonder how you ever got down court," Sanders said. "It's like, 'Hey, did I once do that?' I can sure see why I'm not playing for a living anymore. The game was more rest than play for me."

Not really. Sanders hit two of his four field goal attempts for four points. He was the only East player to make at least half his shots from the floor. The East made just 17 of 56 field goal heaves. Dave Cowens did grab nine rebounds, though.

The object of this game was to bring back memories and relive old times, but those involved took the game seriously.

"There is still that competitive edge," Havlicek said. "You start out casual and then the intensity picks up."

Said Cousy: "Once the whistle blows, you take it seriously. Whatever sport it happens to be in these types of games, you approach it in a macho sort of way. You don't want anyone to think you're taking it seriously. You're too cool for that.

"When the game starts, you want to show what you can do. The spirit is rolling and you get into it. This is no comedy routine."

It was a fun event, a competitive show and for a worthwhile cause — proceeds from All-Star Saturday go to the NBA Legends Foundation to benefit needy former players.

Perhaps Tom Sanders summed up the event, and the entire All-Star Saturday, best of all when he said, "These guys are capable of magic. It's some of the best talent ever to be assembled on one court. It was an honor to be among them."

"On The Road Again"

A Not So Catchy Tune

If the NBA ever had a theme song, no tune would be more apropos than "On The Road Again."

The travel schedule of an NBA player is hectic, to say the least. Unlike baseball, where a team might stay in the same city three or four days at a time, the basketballers come in, play their game and get out of town by sundown. Sometimes, it's by sunup. Wake-up calls at 5:30 or 6:00 in the morning to catch a flight aren't uncommon.

It's rough, even for a millionaire power forward. An extended road trip might send a team to New Jersey one night, Indiana the next, an off day, then Denver, Phoenix and Sacramento in succession.

Frank Layden, the Utah Jazz witty coach/general manager, recalls the time he was in a road swing and went to his room, number 207, to open the door. The key wouldn't work.

"Then I remember I was in room 217," Layden says. "Number 207 was last night."

And so it goes. But even with half the 82-game schedule played at home, it probably gets to the point where one feels homeless after a while.

"I don't like it," Celtics guard Rick Carlisle says. "I don't know anyone who does. Sometimes it's fun, but there are a lot of (plane) delays, early-morning calls and sitting around. It takes a lot out of you."

Carlisle says the waiting around in airports with nothing to do is the biggest headache of life on the road. During the recently-concluded Celtics road swing, which saw Boston hit the Western cities, a flight out of a city had to be held off for 90 minutes.

"It takes a lot out of you," Carlisle says.

Veteran center Greg Kite has been in the NBA three years, so he's had ample opportunity to experience the league lifestyle away from Boston.

"It's not too bad," Kite says. "You get tired sometimes with the early morning wakeups to catch flights, but it's not too bad."

Kite seems to handle the travel quite well. However, he does see one problem: If you're in a city like New York, Los Angeles or Oakland (near San Francisco) where there's plenty to do and see, you can't get a lot accomplished. Remember, you come in, play the game, and it's on to the next stop.

"We aren't in places long enough to do anything or see anything," Kite said. "You might be able to see a friend for awhile. That's the way it is."

To Carlisle, it's important that he get together with his friends in various cities.

"It makes it a lot easier when you get together with someone you know," Carlisle says.

Oftentimes, that's not possible, giving the player tons of time to kill before a game. There probably isn't a player in the league who doesn't take a nap before a game. The trend seems to be to grap a couple of hours of rest around 3:00, as the team usually leaves the hotel around 5:30 for a 7:30 game.

When seeing friends isn't possible, Carlisle likes to shop or read to pass the hours away. He says reading is his favorite pastime.

Not only has Carlisle had to learn about the NBA since joining the Celtics, he has had to develop a travelling regimen. At first, he was not the sort to travel light.

"I'm learning a few tricks," Carlisle says. "My first few road trips I was taking way too much stuff (clothes). Now I know how much clothing I need."

Although Kite seems to enjoy the travel, he did have to adjust to all the games and cross-country jaunts. It wasn't like this when Kite was a collegian at Brigham Young.

"That was one of the bigger adjustments," Kite says. "We play more games in one NBA season than we did in my four years at BYU."

And that can have a strange effect on the body.

"It's funny," Carlisle says. "Sometimes you'll feel rested, and sometimes you'll get eight hours of solid sleep and wake up tired.

"After the game (against the Lakers at the Forum), I felt like I could sleep right there. It wears you down. If you could just walk on a plane and go everytime (without delays) it'd be okay. But it's seldom like that, especially on a road trip like this, where we had seven games, six of them back-to-back."

All that globe-trotting can make one wake up in the middle of the night and wonder, "Where am I, anyway?"

"That happens a lot to me," Carlisle says. "When we were in Seattle, then Portland, I had to think about where I was."

Says Kite: "You're in and out a lot, back and forth. It's hard to remember where you are or what day in the week it is."

True, but it's not as if these guys are part of a chain gang or travelling from station via stagecoach.

"You could be doing a lot of things less enjoyable (than playing basketball) Kite says. "You do have 41 games at home and 41 on the road. It's not like going on a vacation to the Bahamas, but it's not brutal.

"We travel nicely and have nice accomodations. You have to look at the total picture. We could be doing a lot of worse things, for a living."

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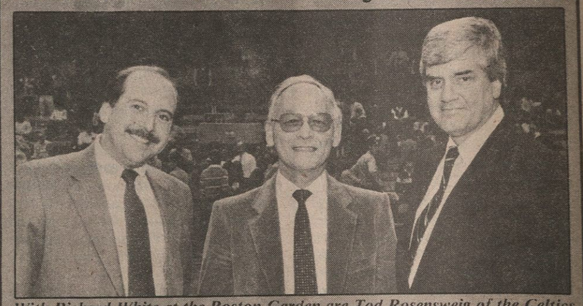
Richard White Fan of the Month



With Richard White at the Boston Garden are Tod Rosensweig of the Celtics (left) and Jack Pacheco of Polariod (right).

In attendance at the Boston Garden for the game between the Celtics and the Washington Bullets on Wednesday, February 5th was the latest winner of the Polaroid/Boston Celtics Fan of the Month contest, Richard White of Wellesley, Mass. As winner of the Fan of the Month, Mr. White received two tickets to the game, a night at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Boston, limousine transportation to and from the game courtesy of Boston Livery Service, an official Celtics Starter jacket, an autographed team basketball and a Polaroid Sun 660 Autofocus camera with film.

You can enter the Boston Celtics/Polaroid Fan of the Month contest at any Claus Gelotte store and get the royal treatment from Polaroid, the offical instant camera of the Boston Celtics.

K.C.s Corner

"We're working hard on the defensive end, and then closing the effort down by limiting the opposition to one shot."

Can't Forget "The Pack"

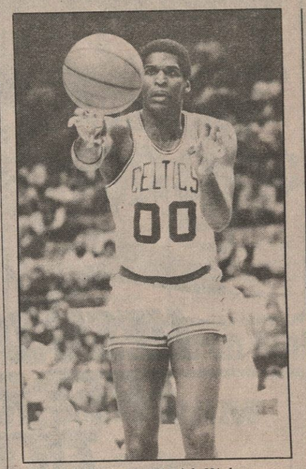
We are back on the west coast for the second time this season; in December, we needed to regroup from a series of deficient defensive performances and we prevailed. We outlasted Utah to reverse our slide, easily defeated the Clippers and the Pacers, and we have played much improved ball since.

The goals have changed, but the necessity of playing hard, effective basketball remains. We have moved ahead of Los Angeles in the competition for the best record in the league. This is a measuring instrument (Boston is 39-9; Los Angeles is 37-12). We cannot afford to be watching the standings and forget the Seattles, Portlands, or Denvers. These "middle-of-the -pack" (I used the description advisedly) teams stand poised to upset the teams at the top.

Besides, we have met the Lakers on this trip. At the time, when you play the best, you deliver every talent and go to war. Celtics-Lakers games are consistently high-level games.

Our guys played some of their best ball of the year as we headed into the All-Star break. We surged in the 2nd half to nip the 76ers at home on January 26th, and after laying off, scratched out a rough contest in Chicago. We would eventually stretch our winning streak to 13 until we played a bad game in Sacramento to lose, 105-100, in the game which began the second half of the season. Our coaching staff, Larry Bird, Kevin McHale, and Robert Parish went to the All-Star Game in Dallas, a game which we also won.

Chicago. January 30. At Chicago, we played a very fitful game; our offense produced little, we seemed to be going in several different directions. But throughout our winning streak, our defense has been outstanding. As a team, our awareness and support have been enduring



Robert playing well with Walton

assets. We held the Bulls to 91 points (a 101-91 win).

We were very sluggish in Chicago, but I thought it was because we couldn't get anywhere to loosen up for a shoot around the morning of the game, as part of our normal routine. We just sat around the hotel all morning and seemed disoriented all night in the game. A feature I was pleased with was how effectively Robert Parish and Bill Walton are playing together.

Washington. The Washington game was indicative of what I like to see from us. Scott Wedman got off well, hitting his first five shots, Larry was horsing the boards, and Robert continued his fine two-way play. Kevin McHale missed the trip; we have relied on our passing and outside game more in his absence. But our intensity level was at a peak in the game at Washington. The Bullets have traditionally played us well in Landover and their inside game is intimidating with Bol. I believe our guys were challenged by these factors. And they responded.

Seattle. As in Atlanta, when we fell into a first-half swoon, our play against the Seattle SuperSonics was as if we were in a daze. There has been much talk about our having the Sonics' first-round choice; maybe we were taken in by their struggle in the West currently. We were flat, and they went ahead. I called two timeouts, and they went further in front. Fortunately, we received some strong play off the bench from Jerry Sichting, and clever offense and punishing man-to-man defense from Larry.

In the beginning of that ballgame, their rookie, Xavier McDaniel was unstoppable in the post-up game against Scott Wedman. Larry asked to take him and I okayed this (I normally don't like to place Larry on the opposition's leading scorer. With Larry's output on offense, it's like asking the man to play an 84-minute game). Bird held the rookie to 6 second half points and we came back, 114-101.

Milwaukee. We played one of our best games of the year against the Bucks; our defense was again aggressive, our passing game was sharp, and our concentration was focused for 48 minutes. Kevin played his only recent minutes of regular season play here and he sparked us with 13 points. But he was obviously ailing and we kept him out. Kevin is a class player, a competitor, and a pro who loves the game. He took great pride, for example, in being chosen to play in the All-Star Game.

I would have perferred he take that time to rest the leg, but he insisted on going to the game and playing. Those decisions are never clear-cut, they are in a grey area, decided by the player, the doctor, and the coach.

The Bucks were returning to Milwaukee after a two-week West Coast trip, and we caught them. We were very pleased, but they have surprised us in Boston, too.

Washington. We closed out the first half of the season with another strong defensive game against the Bullets. As Robert continues to play effectively against Manute Bol (25 points), Bill Walton again delivered to complement Robert. Bill took command of the defensive boards with Larry---Walton had 17 rebounds, Larry had 16. The Bullets attempted to slow the pace down all night and they succeeded. But we rallied behind Bird and Sichting again.

Bird has fully regained his form after his early season physical problems. His competiveness, his fight off the offensive boards, his shooting, and his attitude and his leadership supplement what he gives us in points.

And I'm pleased with the defense. We're working hard on the defensive end, and then closing the effort down by limiting the opposition to one shot.

All-Star Game. Dallas. The All-Star Game is an enjoyable and surprising (I walked into the lobby one of the nights and there was Red Auerbach 'riding a bull!) time. After a weekend of competitions, including Larry winning the 3-Point Field Goal award and Spud Webb winning the dunking contest, the East won the game itself, 139-132. I respect the man Isiah---he brings an attitude, style, hustle, and execution to the game that is the best in the game today. But the game was difficult; their fast break attack and dunking got them started, and we had to hustle and scrap to stay in it. We hung in through the late stages, and won behind Larry and Isiah. My idea in the end was to have Buck Williams team with Moses Malone, Kevin, and Larry; we wanted to neutralize their board strength. We felt with Isiah running the ball up, we could make enough big plays down the stretch.

Robert told me before the game to let the young guys go after it. He just said to give him five or six minutes and he'd be happy. His desire came in handy; there were not enough minutes to go around with the talent on the team.

Sacramento. We went through a hard workout the night after the All-Star Game and soon after, Kevin knew his Achilles tendon still was not right. This is something we will have to watch all season, I'm afraid. This was the signal of defeat, unfortunately. We did not play well for three and a half quarters and our final minute surge came up short. Turnovers hampered both teams, and in the third quarter, Mike Woodson came out firing. When he was finally through, we were behind, 81-60.

Winning streaks are important; they reflect effort, execution, and result. But what is more important is the attitude and effort you bring to the ballgame each night. Teams will not win every ballgame in the regular season. But a team should be able to execute on offense and dig down on the defensive end each night. If this is done, the team will win enough.

M. L. Carr

There's Life After Basketball

One of the things keeping me busy now that my playing career has ended is my company, called, M.L. Enterprises. It's a public relations firm that does promotional campaigns for companies--dealing with employee morale and other issues. We try to build a sense of teamwork within the company.

We also do advertising for companies, trying to enhance their image within the community.

This type of work is right down my line. I was doing it on an unstructured basis for seven or eight years when I was playing, going to companies and giving motivational speeches. I've tried to impress upon them that you've got to have the right attitude and a total team commitment. I put together structured programs to enhance their employee-company relations.

Every now and then, we do mention the Celtics. People have heard a little bit about them. It does help the business.

To be a successful business, you have to get away from negative egos, just like in basketball or any other sport. There are roles that each person has to play, and you have to respect that role. It's the same thing in a corporate setting. Not everybody can be the president--not everybody can be the superstar of the club.

The president or district manager's arm isn't long enough to go around every employee's shoulder. In basketball, K.C. Jones arm can't go around every player after a game. The employee has to be internally motivated.

There's a strong correlation between sports and the corporate setting. You're dealing with people, and egos can destroy a team or company. Low morale is obviously bad, also.

I started speaking to companies when I was playing, and it got around that I was a dynamic speaker! It started to snowball, and now, companies from everywhere are calling for me. Things are going well. We're trying to tap the New England market because there are enough employees in this area to make it happen. I'd rather help the New England market than anywhere else, but I'm not opposed to travelling.

How do some of our programs work? We can go in and do motivational programs. Say if a sales group is in a drive for its quarter projection or fiscal year, we can provide that extra zip. We come in and give them a motivational pitch.

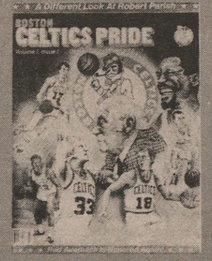
If a company is having trouble with low morale or high turnover, we'll formulate a program to deal with that. We talk about the essence of loyalty. If a team wins, everybody wins. If a company flourishes, you get bonuses. But it's not only money, you get personal satisfaction as well.

If things are going down the tubes, I'll try to make people think about plugging the holes in the ship and solving the problems, rather than jumping the ship.

We have helped turn many negative situations around in the business community. I wouldn't be doing this if it weren't helping. I've been getting positive feedback. It makes me feel good, not only because I'm helping, but because I'm building the company.

Cynthia Gaucher works with me and is the brains our operation. Red Auerbach used to say you have to surround yourself with good people, smart people, people who know what they're doing. I've done that here.

Some of our clients are New Balance, the Bank of Boston, AT&T and New England Iron and Metal. It's starting to happen. The motto of the company is "Join the Winning Team."



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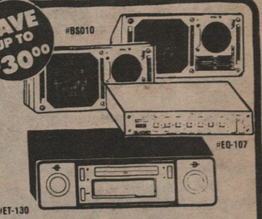

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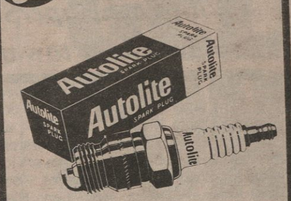

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"Seattle Watch"

Celtics Just Might Be in Draft Lottery

The visit of the Seattle SuperSonics to the Boston Garden earlier this month was meaningful, as most Celtics fans are aware. Obviously, the game itself caused a stir; the Celtics, trailing by an astounding 47-26 tally early, rallied relentlessly through the final three quarters to pass Bernie Bickerstaff's young team, 114-101. "That's why they're the best team in basketball," commented Bickerstaff, Coach of the Sonics who is entrusted with rebuilding the former great team from the Pacific Northwest.

But Celtics fans could have been forgiven if they were looking at a part of their own team's future that Sunday afternoon. For even as former Celtic Gerald Henderson kept the Sonics in the game with feisty defense and cold-blooded marksmanship with the jump shot, the Sonics were a beaten team.

With each SuperSonic defeat, the Celtics move closer toward obtaining a prime selection in the 1986 College Draft.

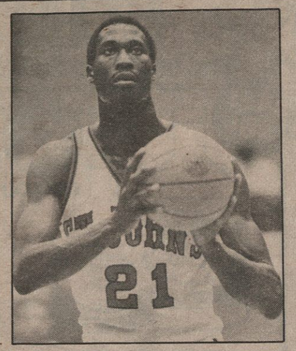
Two weeks before the beginning of last season, the Celtics swapped Henderson, a star from their 1983-84 champions, to the Sonics in exchange for the Seattle 1st-round draft choice this season. Seattle was hoping to redesign their team last season; they traded Gus Williams, drafted Tim McCormick, released David Thompson. This year they have added standout first-year player Xavier McDaniel. But, because they are young, because they have lost Tom Chambers to injury for several games, and because they have yet to have the experience to win close games, they are in danger of finishing out of the playoffs.

Boston, which has Seattle's draft choice, would enter the draft lottery if the Sonics finished in this position. As the league opened play for the second half of the season, Seattle was 18-33, 4th worst in the NBA.

* * * * *

The NBA Draft Lottery was established in 1984-85 after Houston slipped dramatically at the close of 1983-84, and the prospect of drafting Akeem Olajuwon became a very real reward for losing. No open official complaints were lodged--- indeed, Chicago too was dropping games as quickly as night falls in the winter---but to eliminate the temptation, the method of determining draft order was altered. The teams not making the playoffs were grouped in a lottery. On Sunday, May 12th, 1985, David Stern initiated the system: he drew the seven teams from a barrel, one by one, with the final being the first choice in the draft (Patrick Ewing went to the Knicks).

This standing of the teams, in reverse order, as the league resumed play February 18th.



Berry: Could come out.

Price: Celtics type?

23.	Golden State	17-38
22.	Chicago	17-38
21.	New York	18-36
20.	Indiana	19-35
19.	Seattle	20-34
18.	Clippers	21-32
17.	Cleveland	21-32
16.	Sacramento	21-32
15.	Phoenix	22-30

The 23rd through the 17th teams would enter the lottery---except that the Clippers, having traded their first round choice of this year for Joe Bryant (6-9 G) of Philadelphia in 1979, forfeit that choice to the 76ers. Philadelphia, like their arch-rivals Boston, are watching the bottom of the standings with more than a passing interest.

With Each SuperSonic defeat, the Celtics move closer toward a prime selection

And there are superbly talented players who are seniors (and others who likely will declare although it is impossible to accurately know that). Some of these players include: Chuck Person (Auburn), Kenny Walker (Kentucky), Len Bias (Maryland), Ron Harper (Miami, O.) William Bedford (Memphis State), Roy Tarpley (Michigan), Brad Daugherty (North Carolina), Mark Price (Georgia Tech), John Salley (Georgia Tech), Stevie Mitchell (UAB), Johnny Dawkins (Duke), David Wingate (Georgetown), Del Curry (Virginia Tech), Steve Hale (North Carolina), Ed Davender (Kentucky), Ron Kellogg (Kansas).

Possible additions include: Dwayne "Pearl" Washington (Syracuse), Danny Manning (Kansas), and Walter Berry (St. John's). The talent is obviously there.

Ed Badger, the Celtics' full-time Super Scout, won't commit his efforts toward searching out the first choice in the draft. Pressed, he stated, "We do think we will be looking at the players who will go in the first 10-12 players in the draft."

Cleveland and Sacramento also are unique cases in the draft. After the Cavs were finally rescued from Ted Stepien's ownership in 1983 by the Gund Brothers, the new owners were promised the option to purchase first round choices for the ensuing five seasons (under Stephien, the Cavs had traded players like Mike Mitchell, Bill Laimbeer, and several first round draft choices) for players who were bench quality (Bill Robinzine, Richard Washington, Jerome Whitehead, Ron Brewer). The Cavs may be in the lottery.

Sacramento signed Free Agent Terry Tyler in December; Detroit, Tyler's former team, has the option of selecting the Kings' first-round choice in 1986 or 1987. The Kings have improved recently (they upset the Celtics 105-100 in Sacramento to sever the C's 13-game winning string) but they linger on the borderline, 1½ games away from the lottery. Detroit may be one of three Eastern Conference standout teams in the upcoming lottery. A final first round switch has the C's sending their own choice to the Clippers as part of the Walton for Cedric Maxwell trade. The Clippers traded the choice to Portland in exchange for Darnell Valentine.

The second round of the draft is less glamorous, although there are noteworthy selections. Boston's second round choice now goes to the Knicks---because Ray Williams signed an offer sheet with the Clippers in Pre-Season; the Celtics had passed on Williams earlier this season and if Ray had failed to sign with another team, the C's could have kept their selection.

The youthful giants, Atlanta, in addition to their own first round choice, own three selections in the 2nd round, as do the Suns.

* * * * *

Last season, the Celtics simulated a lottery process; they needed a point guard, had Sam Vincent on the top of their prospect list, and on draft day, after the Rockets chose Steve Harris, the C's had their man.

According to the **Boston Globe**, the Celtics have had their eye on Bedford, a lean, aggressive, and fast center. Bias played in Red Auerbach's Summer Camp last August, and was brilliant, an impact type. According to Rick Weitzman, Celtics scout, Dawkins is "the real thing." He has shone in duels with Price.

With the C's aging imperceptibly (Parish, Dennis Johnson, and Walton are in their thirties and next season Bird will be 30), the upcoming draft is important. "Very important," states Marketing Director Tod Rosensweig.

* * * * *

"We might be the last team in the play-offs, but we'll get in there somehow," stated Henderson after the game earlier this month in Boston. "If we don't make them, Red will be a genius again in his old age," continued the Virginian, irony creeping into his voice.

"I know the people in Boston don't want to hear this," added Bernie Bickerstaff, "but I'm pretty sure we can make the playoffs."

Events are unpredictable; injuries appear to be claiming the Knicks this season, and Patrick Ewing was supposed to save the Knicks basketball fortunes. Mike Carey wrote in **The Boston Herald** that Jack Sikma felt that the reason he was snubbed for the All-Star Game was coaches in the West felt the Sonics had faded last year in order to enter the lottery, and have a chance to select Ewing.

No such failures could provide a measure of compensation this year. The Sonics have dropped ten games to this point in the year by 5 points or less. Chambers is edging back into the lineup after this broken foot, but McCormick is a year away. Seattle's a young team; "When we made a run at them in Boston," remembers Jerry Sichting, "they got rattled." Because of inexperience.

Trades may alter the choices in the draft (as when Detroit traded Dan Roundfield to Washington for Ricky Mahorn. With new faces, the Pistons unexpectedly chose Joe Dumars, when they seemed to be well-stocked with guards).

And when the season draws to a close, just as teams at the top seem to find extra incentive to finish first, teams at the bottom become dispirited and lose their drive to win. Then, teams fall to the bottom of the heap, suddenly eligible for the early choices in the draft.

Celtics Draft Central '85

NBA Draft: Risky Business?

Besides the old refrain --- "Red's done it again!" --- a common thread which connects recent drafts has to be uncertainty. Auerbach of course has been masterminding insightful picks since 1954, when he drafted Frank Ramsey, Cliff Hagan, and Lou Tsioropoulos as futures, all from the University of Kentucky. He was able to obtain these players' rights because they were going to serve in the Korean War. Two seasons later, they emerged; Auerbach used Ramsey as a swing man in the 6th Man role and used the very good small forward Hagan as trade material in obtaining University of San Francisco's Bill Russell. He moved up to 2nd selection in the whole draft in this trade with the St. Louis Hawks.

In more recent seasons, questions surrounding the draft logically date back to 1969-70; this was the season Kareem Abdul-Jabbar turned pro. But at that time there were two leagues, the American Basketball Association along with the NBA. Players like Bill Walton and David Thompson were bidding plums before the leagues merged in time for the 1976-77 season.

Larry Bird was selected by Auerbach in the 1978 draft, though the Hoosier still had a season of college eligibility remaining and the Celtics GM was reasonably sure Bird would remain at Indiana State. The following year, the Lakers found themselves watching the reverse standings: they had New Orleans (Jazz') choice, and the prize that season was exciting Earvin "Magic" Johnson, anxious to join the NBA and to play with Abdul-Jabbar.

Other intrigue surrounding the draft followed. James Worthy entered the league, he confessed several years later, because a team like the Lakers who had won the previous season's championship (1981-82) would draft him. Similarly, Dominique Wilkins held out steadfastly in the same year and forced a trade to Atlanta. Wilkins had played college ball at the University of Georgia.

The Rockets began sensing the arrival of Ralph Sampson before the 1982-83 season began; Moses Malone signed a megamillion dollar contract with Harold Katz and the Philadelphia 76ers. The Rockets' season became almost an instant nightmare.

Auerbach's most recent maneuvering came before the 1980 draft; sitting with the first choice in the whole draft as a result of compensation for the Pistons having signed Bob McAdoo, he instead swapped the choice for Robert Parish and the Warriors' 1st choice, the third in the entire draft. He had been assured the Warriors would use that top choice to select Joe Barry Carroll, the obvious move to replace their traded center, Parish. Auerbach also knew that Utah, selecting next, was committed to College Player of the Year, Darrell Griffith, who had led Louisville to the NCAA title.

The Celtics, with the 3rd choice in the draft, took Kevin McHale. The trade was Carroll and McAdoo for Parish and McHale. And McAdoo's arrival in Detroit was set in motion because the Celtics had signed Piston Free Agent, M.L. Carr.

The Celtics won the 1981 and 1984 championships with these men as key figures. The Pistons fortunes would change for the better. For the 1981-82 draft, the choice between Dallas and Detroit involved two hot-shot candidates. Dallas, with the first selection in the whole draft, anguished over the decision---whether to draft Mark Aguirre or Isiah Thomas. The Mavs finally decided on Aguirre, leaving Thomas for the Pistons. Detroit has not missed the playoffs since, carrying the Celtics deep into the playoffs last season behind the 2-time All-Star MVP.

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Celtics Confidential

By Bob Schron

Number Seventeen. John Havlicek, slightly greying only imperceptibly slowing, scrimmaged with the Celtics as the current edition conducted its final Boston practice before the All-Star Game and their February West Cost road journey. Havlicek participated to prepare for the February 8th Legends Game in Dallas. **Bob Cousy, Dave Cowens, Tom Sanders, Bailey Howell,** and **Pete Maravich** were other former Celtics. Bill Russell coached the East Team. On WTBS, **Red Auerbach** provided expert color commentary. Among Auerbach's observations: "The reason the players take this game so seriously is their inherent competitive natures. They don't want to lose in anything...Another important feature for the players is that he is playing again for his family. He may have children who never saw how terrific player he once was. He has another opportunity."

Auerbach, ever the Coach, predicted the team which had the players "in the best condition" in the game at the end, would win. About **Bailey Howell,** Auerbach stated, "Howell had the belief he could get to one of five offensive rebounds he pursued. Most players today don't have that determination."... An interesting matchup was Cousy against former Cincinnati Royal and player under Cousy when Cousy coached at Cincinnati, **Oscar Robertson.** The two all-time greats did not get along. Oscar: "I think it was because the franchise knew it was moving (to Kansas City) and Cousy realized the Royals couldn't afford me. But I could never agree with the fact that he would never promote me to the press. Even when I was playing well."

Gerald Henderson returned to the Garden for his only appearance with the SuperSonics, February 2nd. To a long, long standing ovation. Henderson and old friend Robert Parish attempted to dine together in town the night before but couldn't make arrangements. **Marie Henderson** had the couple's first child recently...Henderson assured that his problems with Coach Bernie Bickerstaff were resolved. "Bernie thought I was bringing the ball up the court too fast. I finally had to agree with him. We're (Seattle) slow."...**Jean and Nate "Tiny" Archibald** also had their first child--- during the 3rd quarter of the Celtics-Sonic game at the Garden. Tiny, University of Georgia Assistant Coach, had been at the couple's New York home one day before the delivery, but had returned for the team's important home game against LSU, won by Georgia. Archibald is enjoying the job in Athens, although

Dave Cowens and Zelmo went at it.

reportly, much of the time is spent "babysitting." Yet, there are few around who are better with the young athlete than Archibald... **Sam Vincent,** who the team is grooming to hopefully be Archibald's heir apparent, was down about his lack of playing time, reduced after his injury, January 15th. When Eastern All-Star **Jeff Malone** suffered similar anxiety in his rookie season, Malone turned to the Assistant Coach Bernie Bickerstaff in Washington for support. Vincent received the same boost from **Jimmy Rodgers,** Celtics Assistant. "Jimmy told me I was out of the subsititution rotation because of my injury, and because the team was playing well," recalled Vincent. "His assurance helped me." Vincent appeared on "Sports Huddle", on WHDH, February 2nd...

Whereabouts. During the All-Star break, **Danny Ainge** went to Phoenix on a golfing vacation...**Greg Kite** travelled to Houston to visit family, as did **Vincent,** in Lansing... **Jerry Sichting** on how **Larry Bird** motivates himself for virtually every game: "I think it's a combination of his own pride, which is very high, and other's expectations. Players and coaches think he's the best, and he thinks he has to play that way."... **James Worthy,** the Lakers' star forward, felt that the reason Bird won the 3-point Field Goal Contest in Dallas was his "mental concentration. He was certain of his release, so he didn't even watch the ball go through the net. He was already on to (shooting) the next shot. It goes back to his ability to concentrate."...**Five days in the Life of Super Scout Ed Badger:** During the weekend before the All-Star break, Badger was in Boston for three days to assist in practice for the Lakers, in addition to scouting meetings with Red Auerbach, **Jimmy Rodgers, K.C. Jones,** and **Rick Weitzman.** Then in was on to Chapel Hill and Durham, North Carolina for three games in two days (Georgia Tech at North Carolina; Maryland at Duke; and Notre Dame at UNC). Badger then flew to Cincinnati, his home, and then to Toledo, for the Northern Illinois-Toledo match. He concluded with the Celtics at Chicago constest, January 30th...Asked about the Celtics cohesion with their turnover of personnel from last season, **Bird** commented that it takes about half a season for a team to adjust to new players' playing styles and approaches.

Bill Walton was the subject of David Dupree's "cover story" feature in the January 29th edition of USA Today...Bird will be the subject of a feature in Sport Magazine in May...The Celtics Carribbean Cruise, with ports of call in St. Thomas, Nassau, St. Maarten, and NCL's Private Island, is scheduled for June 21-28. **Rick Carlisle, Dennis Johnson, Kevin McHale, Robert Parish, David Thirdkill,** Ainge, Sichting, Kite, Vincent, and Walton are at this time preparing to sail with the S/S Norway. For further information, contact Four Seasons Travel, 131 Middlesex Turnpike, Burlington, MA 01803. Telephone number is (AC 617) 273-5568.

Thirdkill, befitting a player who has had to struggle, seemingly, for every one of his NBA days, was cautiously happy leaving for St. Louis and the All-Star Game break. "I'm just hoping things work out here," reflected the 3-year pro. "The thing I'm aiming for is consistency---play hard and effectively every time out." Third is the youngest of nine siblings, son of a southern city couple married for 38 years. "We didn't have a lot growing up," he remembers. "But we supported each other continuously." The most significant lesson from his adolescent years: "Work as hard as you can each day, endure, and make the best of every opportunity...

Glenn Ordway interviewed Scott Wedman during the team's 13-game winning streak; among Wedman's observations: "Our confidence is building as a team and as a group. Even when we were behind by 23 to Atlanta and 21 to Seattle (both were eventual wins), we were able to regroup. I think this is reflecting our personality as a team and our ability to tighten up our defense. We're a very good defensive team right now" ..."Despite what others thought, I think Larry Bird has played very well all year. The reason I've been able to get so many clear shots is that Larry is always the focus of the other team's defense. I think the reason we win so frequently originates from the attitude Larry brings to the game each night."... **Walton's** thoughts on retaining the best record in the league (the Celts were 3 games ahead of the Lakers as they began their West Coast swing): "We have to avoid letdowns at home. We do that because we expect to win. When we're on the road we concentrate more; like Tuesday night we were the underdogs in Milwaukee (February 5), so we got up for the game"...

Walton similarly expressed concern about McHale's injury. "There are alot of games and Kevin is too important a player to have out of there for long periods of time. We can win some of the games individually, but without him, we become too finesse-oriented"...

Cousy thought the Kings' defense was overpowering in the first three quarters of the Feb. 11th game against the Celtics. Reason enough for the C's to leave their front line players in the game. Bird had been saddled with four fouls throughout the final half...

Tommy Heinsohn was the subject of a positive feature from the Boston Herald's Jim Baker, Feb. 9... According to **Bob Ryan, Steve Hale** North Carolina's off-guard, has projected himself into the 1st round of the June draft...**Mike Madden** of The Globe on February 2nd wrote an insightful column about the matter of confidentiality between teams and reporters.

GAME BY GAME - REVIEW

February 5, at Boston Celtics 103, Bullets 88

For the 13th time in a row, the Celtics hit the hardwood and came away with a victory. Larry Bird led the way with 26 points and six assists, Robert Parish tossed in 25 scores. Bill Walton came off the bench to have a sterling game-- 13 points and 17 rebounds. Walton also blocked a shot and had three steals.

Manute Bol's performance was pretty minute. The 7-6 Sudanese center scored just eight points, and was no match for Parish or Walton.

The victory gave Boston a 38-8 record, the exact same log it had after 46 games a year ago.

February 12, at Sacramento Kings 105, Celtics 100

The end of the All-Star break also marked the end of the Celtics winning streak.

And it took an odd event for the Kings to fashion this win. Boston had a chance to pull within one of the ex-Kansas Cityans, but Larry Bird missed two free throws with 31 seconds left, and there went the game.

"I was really surprised that he missed those," Kings forward Mark Olberding said. "It was kind of unbelievable."

Said Boston Coach K.C. Jones; "You know it's going to be a long night when Bird is missing free throws."

It wasn't a totally lost night for Bird. He did manage to score 29 points. Robert Parish and Dennis Johnson had 19 each for Boston.

The Celtics offense was way out of kilter in the third quarter. Boston made a frigid 15 percent of its field goal tries, which enabled Sacto to build a 19 point lead.

February 13, at Seattle Celtics 107, Sonics 96

The Celtics got back on the beam in the Pacific Northwest with this win over the SuperSonics. Larry Bird had his third triple-double of the year, 31 points, 15 rebounds and 11 assists. In the first quarter Bird had 11 points, 6 rebounds and 5 assists.

Bill Walton had 17 points and 10 rebounds. Scott Wedman got the starting nod in place of the ailing Kevin McHale, and fired in 16 markers.

Tom Chambers led the Sonics with 25 points. Erstwhile Gerald Henderson had 14.

February 14, at Portland Celtics 120, Blazers 119

"I didn't have the greatest shot," Larry Bird said. "but it went in." That three-footer, with three seconds remaining, gave the Celtics a 120-119 win over Portland in overtime.

It was on of many baskets scored by the wonderkind forward. Bird 47 points--connecting on 21 of 34 field goal tries--- grabbed 14 rebounds and had 11 assists. It was his second triple-double in as many nights.

"It was Larry Bird at his best," Celtics Coach K.C. Jones said.

"Not very much about him surprised me. Tonight, though, I saw more left-handed shots go down for him than I think I've ever seen."

A 15-foot jumper by Bird with six seconds to play in regulation time went down, forcing the extra session. The Blazers had a chance to win, but Kiki Vandeweghe missed a shot at the buzzer. Vandeweghe finished with a season-high 38 points.

Dennis Johnson scored 29 points for the Celtics, and Robert Parish had 20. Jerome Kersey was second to Vandeweghe's point out put with 21.

February 16, at Los Angeles Celtics 105, Lakers 99

In a rematch between the NBA's titans, the Celtics came away a winner once more. This nationally-televised bout at the Forum was a barn-burner from the open tip to the end of the game.

The Celtics were without forward Kevin McHale, still bothered by a lame achilles tendon, and had to make do without All-Star center Robert Parish for much of the game because of foul trouble, but still had enough firepower to down the defending World Champions.

Dennis Johnson scored 23 points and Larry Bird had 22 points and 18 rebounds. Bill Walton picked up much of the slack for Parish with 10 points, several rebounds, tough defense and some nice assists.

The C's also got some fine play from Jerry Sichting and Rick Carlisle. Sichting had 10 points, and Carlisle, in his finest game in a Celtics uniform, scored 11, points, hitting five of seven shots from the field.

"It was a monumental team effort," Boston Coach K.C. Jones said "Without Kevin, they took advantage of Scott Wedman on James Worthy, but we got big lifts from Rick and Bill."

The Lakers were bogged down by poor shooting. LA scored a mere 19 points in the fourth quarter, making just 31 percent of their shots in the final stanza.

"Boston made all the plays when they had to," Laker Coach Pat Riley said. "I'm sure they feel good about themselves with their two wins, but the playoffs are a long way away."

Said Magic Johnson: "We've got to get our game together for the playoffs, because right now Boston is a better team."

February 17, at Phoenix Suns 105, Celtics 101

Neither K.C. Jones nor Larry Bird was around to see the conclusion of this contest, as both picked up two technical fouls and were bounced from the premises. That's probably just as well, since Phoenix upended the Celtics.

"You have to play a near-perfect game to beat the Celtics, and we did that," Phoenix Coach John MacLeod said.

Suns' forward Mike Sanders was pretty perfect in the fourth quarter, where he scored all his 14 points: Walter Davis led the balanced Phoenix attach with 20, James Edwards had 17 and Larry Nance 16.

Dennis Johnson and Bird had 24 apiece for Boston. Forward/center Bill Walton had another good game for the C's--18 points.

Celtics 103, Bullets 88
WASHINGTON
Robinson 7-15 1-1 15, Jones 2-4 0-0 4, Bol 3-5 2-2 8, Williams 4-13 2-2 10, Malone 8-17 5-6 21, Roundfield 2-7 4-4 8, Wood 5-12 4-4 14, Daye 3-9 0-2 6, Bradley 0-2 0-0 0, McKenna 0-1 0-0 0, Gregory 1-1 0-0 2. Totals 35-86 18-21 88.
BOSTON
Wedman 5-13 4-4 15, Bird 9-23 8-9 26, Parish 10-20 5-6 25, Johnson 0-0 0-0 0, Ainge 5-9 0-0 11, Walton 6-11 1-1 13, Thirdkill 0-0 0-0 0, Sichting 4-8 0-0 9, Carlisle 0-2 0-0 0, Kite 0-1 0-0 0, Vincent 0-0 4-4 4. Totals 39-87 22-24 103.

Washington	25	23	20	20— 88
Boston	22	27	28	26—103

Three-point goals—Wedman, Ainge, Sichting. Fouled out—None. Rebounds—Washington 47 (Robinson, Roundfield 8), Boston 56 (Walton 17). Assists—Washington 18 (Williams 4), Boston 26 (Bird, Johnson 8). Total fouls—Washington 24, Boston 18. Technicals—Boston illegal defense, Bird. A—14,890.

Kings 105, Celtics 100
BOSTON
Wedman 5-13 0-0 10, Bird 8-18 12-16 29, Parish 6-18 7-8 19, D.Jonhson 8-22 0-0 19, Ainge 1-8 2-2 4, Walton 3-7 1-2 7, Thirdkill 2-5 2-2 6, Sichting 0-4 4-5 4, Carlisle 0-1 0-0 0, Kite 0-1 0-0 0, Vincent 1-3 0-0 2. Totals 35-100 28-35 100.
SACRAMENTO
Tyler 2-7 1-2 5, Olberding 4-7 4-5 12, Thompson 7-10 7-8 21, Woodson 12-23 3-3 27, Theus 2-8 4-5 8, E.Johnson 9-15 4-4 22, Drew 3-7 2-2 8, Thorpe 1-5 0-0 2, Kleine 0-1 0-0 0. Totals 40-83 25-29 105.

Boston	30	29	12	29—100
Sacramento	24	24	33	24—105

Three-point goals—D.Johnson, Bird. Fouled out—Ainge. Rebounds—Boston 53 (Parish 15), Sacramento 44 (Thompson 10). Assists—Boston 22 (Ainge 9), Sacramento 28 (Theus 10). Total fouls—Boston 25, Sacramento 27. Technicals— E.Johnson. A—10,333.

Celtics 107, Sonics 96
BOSTON
Bird 10-21 11-13 31, Wedman 6-18 0-1 16, Parish 6-11 7-7 19, Ainge 2-9 0-0 4, Johnson 3-11 3-4 10, Sichting 4-6 0-0 8, Walton 6-9 5-7 17, Kite 0-0 0-0 0, Thirdkill 0-1 2-2 2, Carlisle 0-0 0-0 0, Vincent 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 39-86 26-34 107.
SEATTLE
Chambers 8-19 8-8 25, McDaniel 6-17 1-2 13, Sikma 6-13 4-4 16, Henderson 6-8 2-2 14, Young 3-11 0-0 7, Sobers 3-9 0-0 6, McCormick 4-9 0-0 8, Vranes 2-2 0-0 4, Wood 2-6 1-4 5, Phelps 0-1 0-0 0, Brickowski 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 40-95 16-20 96.

Boston	32	33	22	20—107
Seattle	25	34	20	19— 96

Three-point goals—Johnson, Chambers, Young. Fouled out—None. Rebounds—Boston 49 (Bird 15), Seattle 49 (McDaniel 13). Assists—Boston 32 (Bird 11), Seattle 21 (Young 6). Total fouls—Boston 17, Seattle 33. Technicals—Seattle Coach Bickerstaff. A—14,230.

Celtics 120, Blazers 119 (OT)
BOSTON
Bird 21-34 2-3 47, Wedman 4-9 0-0 8, Parish 10-17 0-1 20, Ainge 1-3 0-0 2, D.Johnson 11-18 7-7 29, Walton 3-5 0-0 6, Thirdkill 3-5 0-0 6, Sichting 1-2 0-0 2, Carlisle 0-0 0-0 0, Kite 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 54-93 9-11 120.
PORTLAND
Kersey 10-19 1-4 21, Vandeweghe 13-22 12-14 38, Bowie 2-6 0-0 4, Paxson 5-11 0-0 10, Porter 2-3 2-2 6, Cotter 6-9 2-2 15, Drexler 5-15 10-15 20, Thompson 2-6 1-3 5. Totals 45-91 28-40 119.

Boston	28	27	32	22	11—120
Portland	25	30	26	28	10—119

Three-point goals—Bird 3, Cotter. Fouled out—Walton. Rebounds—Boston 50 (Bird 14), Portland 49 (Bowie 12). Assists—Boston 35 (Ainge 12), Portland 32 (Drexler 9). Total fouls—Boston 30, Portland 18. A—12,666.

Celtics 105, Lakers 99
BOSTON
Bird 7-17 8-12 22, Wedman 5-9 0-0 11, Parish 5-8 1-1 11, Ainge 2-7 0-0 4, D.Johnson 11-23 1-2 23, Walton 5-10 0-1 10, Thirdkill 1-3 1-1 3, Sichting 4-9 2-2 11, Carlisle 5-7 0-0 10, Kite 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 45-93 13-19 105.
L.A. LAKERS
Rambis 0-2 4-4 4, Worthy 14-26 7-9 35, Abdul-Jabbar 7-17 9-11 23, E.Johnson 0-4 6-6 6, McGee 1-2 1-2 4, Cooper 6-13 0-0 15, Scott 5-11 0-0 10, Kupchak 0-1 0-0 0, Lucas 1-1 0-0 2, Green 0-1 0-0 0. Totals 34-78 27-32 99.

Boston	30	29	26	19—	105
L.A. Lakers	29	26	25	19—	99

Three-point goals—Cooper 3, McGee, Wedman, Sichting. Fouled out—None. Rebounds—Boston 58 (Bird 18), Los Angeles 45 (Abdul-Jabbar 9). Assists—Boston 32 (Bird 7), Los Angeles 27 (E.Johnson 12). Total fouls—Boston 23, Los Angeles 19. Technicals—Los Angeles illegal defense,

Suns 108, Celtics 101
BOSTON
Bird 7-15 9-9 24, Wedman 4-11 3-3 11, Parish 5-16 1-2 11, Ainge 1-4 2-2 4, Johnson 11-19 2-2 24, Walton 5-5 8-10 18, Thirdkill 0-0 1-2 1, Sichting 3-4 2-2 8, Carlisle 0-3 0-0 0, Kite 0-1 0-0 0. Totals 36-78 28-32 101.
PHOENIX
Nance 7-12 2-3 16, Pittman 1-1 0-0 2, Edwards 8-14 1-1 17, Davis 10-17 0-2 20, Humphries 6-10 3-5 15, Pinckney 1-1 2-2 4, Foster 1-2 0-0 3, Thompson 2-5 2-2 6, Adams 5-8 1-2 11, Sanders 2-6 10-14 14, Robey 0-1 0-0 0. Totals 43-77 21-31 108.

Boston	27	28	16	30—101
Phoenix	28	26	27	25—108

Three-point goals—Bird, Foster. Fouled out—Ainge. Rebounds—Boston 48 (Parish 11), Phoenix 42 (Nance 11). Assists—Boston 13 (Bird, Johnson, Carlisle 3), Phoenix 32 (Humphries 9). Total fouls—Boston 26, Phoenix 33. Technicals—Bird 2-ejected, Boston Coach Jones 2-ejected, Johnson.

Eddie Gillooly

Statistics Can Be Confusing

No one will ever fault the trading of Cedric Maxwell to the Clippers with the way Bill Walton has performed this season, but one statistic compiled by the Celtics thus far emphasizes the contribution Maxwell made during his eight seasons in Boston. The Celtics have the fewest offensive rebounds in the league.

Maxwell has always had an uncanny knack of fetching his teammates' missed shots. That's been his strong suit since he came into the league as a rookie in 1977. His teammates are always amazed at the way he's able to slither between the behemoths and wriggle his rubbery body into position for a rebound. That was his role with the Celtics and he did it well.

With Maxwell and his determination to marry the offensive boards gone West, the Celtics offense is slightly different now, with Robert Parish and Kevin McHale working together and alternating for their shots in the low post. When Parish is posting down low, McHale will clear out the area and visa versa.

That leaves only one shooter close to the basket to retrieve the offensive carom since Larry Bird is usually on the other side of the court trying to free himself of two opponents. When Maxwell was on the court with either Parish or McHale, his task was to get position under the hoop for the missed shot. He was seldom involved in set plays.

Maxwell's talents haven't diminished either as a member of the Clippers. He's averaging three offensive boards a game as he did with the Celtics, matching the numbers compiled by Parish.

However, Maxwell's departure does not tell the full story of the Celtics low number of offensive rebounds. A key factor is that the Celtics are one of the top three shooting teams in the NBA and therefore have fewer offensive rebounds to collect. Still, they are only average in this category, grabbing 30% of their misses.

The Los Angeles Lakers, top marksman in the league with a .524 shooting percentage are retrieving 34 percent of their misses while the San Antonio Spurs, shooting .509 percent, are grabbing 32 percent of their errant shots. The Celts have a .502 percent accuracy mark.

Not surprisingly, with Moses Malone dominating in the pivot, the Philadelphia 76ers top the league in offensive rebounds, owning 37 percent of their misses. As a matter of fact, Malone, Julius Erving and Charles Barkley have almost as many offensive rebounds as the entire Celtics team.

It should be pointed out though that the Sixers have more opportunities on the offensive boards because they are only making 48% of their shots. The Washington Bullets (.462 percent) and New York Knicks (.465 percent) seem to qualify for the "gang that couldn't shoot straight" club with the worst marks in the NBA. Seattle and the Clippers are not far behind.

There has been evidence in the last few weeks the Celtics will climb out of the last spot in the offensive rebounding category, particularly with the way Walton has been playing when he's on the court with Parish.

Walton is aggressive on the boards and he's been coveting the weakside when Parish is in the low post and achieving a lot of second chance baskets. There are more opportunities for him when he's spelling McHale in the forward slot than when he's replacing Parish in the center spot, because he's able to take advantage of his height.

During McHale's absence, Coach K.C. Jones has been reluctant to use the two centers (Parish and Walton) at the same time but once McHale returns to regular duty, Walton should help the Celts' cause on the offensive boards.

After a recent 17 rebound (total) effort, Walton was quick to point out that was not the norm, theorizing the rebounds are tougher for the center because he has his back to the basket most of the time while out challenging the shooter.

While on the subject of statistics, the Denver Nuggets have inched ahead of the Celtics for the best percentage mark in the league at the free throw line. The Nuggets are clicking at a .796 pace to .792 for the Celts but Bird continues to top all shooters from the charity stripe with a .920 mark.

Reggie Theus, who has become the Sacramento Kings playmaker, is the top giveaway artist, averageing four turnovers a game. Isiah Thomas of the Pistons is not far behind. Bird is in the middle of the pack of the top 23 with a 3.3 game average.

On the brighter side, the Celtics have committed the second fewest fouls (Dallas has the least) and rank second behind the Lakers with the fewest disqualifications. Also, as a team, the Celtics protect the ball better than anyone else. They have the fewest number of turnovers.

Parish, McHale and Walton have been very effective shot blockers but they won't compare with Washington's Manute Bol or Utah's Mark Eaton. Bol is averaging five blocks a game while Eaton is rejecting them at a 4.35 rate.

Even though they are not dominating in individual stats, the Celtics and Lakers are clearly the dominant teams. The Celts are beating their opponents by an 8.4 average while the Lakers are averaging a 9.4 edge a game. While they are outscoring the Celtics by six points a game, the Lakers are giving up five more points then the Celts.

Statistics can be confusing and at this point, I think we've said enough.

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NBA & WTBS Agree On New Cable TV Contract

NBA Commissioner David J. Stern announced during the All-Star Weekend that the league had reached an agreement with WTBS to extend the current national cable contract, due to expire at the end of the current season, for two more years.

The NBA's rights fee will climb from $20 million to $25 million for the two years. WTBS will continue to show a package of 55 regular-season and 20 playoff games.

Stern noted that other cable companies were interested in acquiring rights to the NBA and that USA Network had made a four-year offer. "But the prospects for growth in cable are great and the Board of Governors preferred a two-year deal," said Stern.

In 1979, the first year the NBA had a national cable contract, the league received a $400,000 rights fee.

Lissa Volk: Involved, Dedicated

By Bob Schron

For Lissa Volk, wife of Celtics General Manager Jan Volk, being a member of the Celtics family is a full-time job. For several years, she has been applying her background to her involvement in a variety of Celtics-related enterprises.

She is a graduate from the Boston University Bachelor's and Master's programs; the former degree was a liberal arts matriculation in Sociology. She received her Master's in Reading and Curriculum Planning. A teacher and curriculum planner in Wayland for six years, she halted her career when the Volks started a family in 1976. The couple have two children, Shari, 9, and Matthew, 5.

Her career has continued developing within the Celtics milieu. She is on the Special Olympics committee, an action which has contributed toward the expansion of the presentation coming up in March. She has been able to accompany Jan to increasingly more league functions and has represented the team in these settings. In April, she is joining Celtics owner Alan Cohen in bringing the Alvin Ailey Dance Group to Boston.

Lissa Volk recently recalled her earliest impressions of the Special Olympics. "I was aware that kids who were disabled participated in some programs, like track and field for example. But I thought they were limited in scope.

"Now that I'm on the committee (for the Boston Celtics Special Olympics Fashion Show, at the Westin Hotel, March 6th), I've gained a different perspective. First, the kids are involved in diverse activities, from ice shows, to basketball, to art. Secondly, this is because there are numerous dedicated and selfless individuals working in these programs.

"It's been very rewarding and enlightening."

"The interaction of the Celtics with the larger society is 'education' ", Lissa responded recently. "I believe the players are important role models for youngsters in the society. They symbolize what can be accomplished with hard work. I see Spud Webb straining and then winning the slam-dunk competition. This publicity is important encouragement."

"I think we see the results of this positive influence when the players go and sign autographs for kids. The questions the kids ask, the conversations they transact, show that the kids are developing as a result of being interested and participating in sports."

She is conscious of the effects her husband's career has had on the family. "There are certain restrictions, of course; the kids are aware that during the season there are days and nights when we just don't see Jan that much. But we make a concerted effort to make up for that missed time during the summer."

Lissa has balanced all her roles well.

Yet the Celtics are a special organization in Lissa Volk's opinion. It's an opinion she holds both by observing the interaction within the office and by comparing it to other teams throughout the NBA.

"We have a close cohesive group. Roles within the office are adhered to, but everybody for the most part is willing to help out in another area of the administration of the team.

"Another admirable quality of the team is the positive way the players and the office staff get along. People look up to the Celtics. I'm proud of that."

Much of the reason the Celtics organization approach a tough job in a relaxed manner is because of Jan Volk. He is resilient and strong but is kind and reasonable, too. Lissa points to the family "temperament" as background for this approach. "We realize that there is glamour surrounding the job, but we try to keep every day as normal as we can." So she is involved in carpools, volunteer work in the Wayland community, and a Check-In System which ascertains children arrival at school safely. This unassuming and important responsibility is a balance for her other more visible life.

For hobbies, she is expanding an interest in calligraphy; also she sews, knits, and does needlepoint and is a lover of winter sports (skiing particularly). She is currently beginning a Tap Dance-Aerobics class with Michelle Ainge, Lynn McHale, and Dinah Mattingly. It's a complete life for this lovely blonde woman.

As Jan Volk's role has grown with the team, Lissa's sense of the welfare of the team has expanded similarly. "I do want to promote the welfare of the club," she responded. "I want to get involved and get feedback from the community in different settings. That's why I have been anxious to do different things under the aegis of the team."

An example is her involvement with the Special Olympics, which has been "inspiring because of the dedication of the professionals working on the project.

"The kids are now mainstreamed and seen as educable; people are becoming aware of their needs---you see it in the respect for handicapped parking areas or in schools where their children are encouraged to do projects surrounding special needs.

"A program sponsored by the team and the Special Olympics will bring a lot more interest to some of these needs. We've expanded the program this year---I don't think there will be too many dry eyes the night of the show."

At this time in her life, Lissa Volk is committed to her family, extending her educational interests in the directions of special projects and the Celtics. Although there are pressures associated with her husband's work in a public profession, she is sensitive to them. "I would miss parades and functions while I was teaching---I didn't want to miss the time at school. Now I'm able to participate more fully and there are important advantages to this."

Besides, there are interesting twists and surprises in the complex responsibilities of raising children.

"Our son Matthew has friends who come over and are constantly after Jan--- asking him questions about basketball, trades, the team.

"That is, every one does but Matthew; he's his own child and isn't that interested in basketball! It keeps a balance."

It's the type of balance Lissa Volk is maintaining in her admirable, full life.

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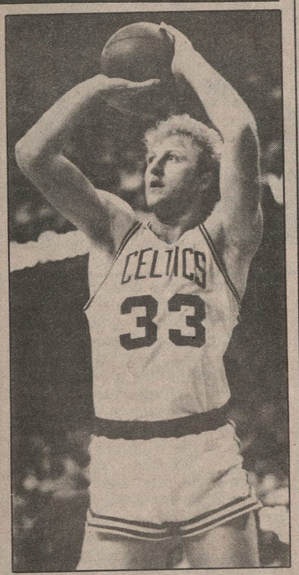
Glenn Ordway

Random thoughts from a Long West Coast Road Trip.

Larry Bird may not be the greatest clutch player of all time but nobody ever did it better. In his case its made even more remarkable by the fact that everybody in the building knows with seconds left he's the one who will take the final shot. The defense always overplays Bird employing a double or triple team. The officials not wanting the game to end with a whistle shy away from calling any bumping or hand check fouls, and dispite all of the obstacles, Bird usually ends up with a couple defenders draped all over him, two points and the game.

This Celtics team has a knack of always remaining loose. And one rule strictly enforced is never seriously downgrade a fellow teammate for messing up. But if you get the occassion to kid him about it in a Don Rickles like fashion — Do it!!! After Scott Wedman tossed a free throw air ball three feet from the basket in Seattle, fellow teammates thanked him for providing a little breeze in the air. They admitted to Scott that the Seattle Coliseum was getting a little too warm anyway. The Celts players have made it a practice to fine each other five dollars for every missed free throw. The fund money to be used for a gigantic party at the end of the season. In the locker room after the game Wedman's teammates teased him with "That miss was worth ten or fifteen dollars." There is no question this light handed approach to mistakes gets the point across without compounding the problem.

If you thought it was tough getting a Celtics ticket at the Boston Garden, you should have seen how impossible it was to obtain one out here on their only visit to the West Coast. Seven games - seven sellouts. All soldout months in advance. And remember some of these teams are accustomed to five and six thousand crowds. In Sacramento. The game was billed as the toughest ticket to obtain in the history of the city, that included all sporting events, concerts and I imagine some of the great western shootouts.



Larry Bird: Nobody does it better

In many of these West Coast arenas it is not unusual to see nearly as many Celtics fans as those of the home team. And we're talking rabid Celtics fans - complete with team jacket, green slacks, large green foam finger and in some cases green painted face.

This trip has not been without the typical long travel delays due to weather or mechanical problems. Matter of fact our record remains intact - we have yet to fly on the posted departure time. The normal flying time from Portland to Los Angeles is two and a half hours. We did it in five. How do the guys spend those idle hours...Bill Walton challenges half the team to chess. Scott Wedman and Greg Kite debate the legitimacy of words in their Scrabble game. Kevin McHale when not reading the latest spy novel is devising his latest prank directed at Danny Ainge. Ainge is challenging his computer chess game in hopes that if he beats the machine he'll be ready to take on Walton. And oh yes...in between games he plans a counter attack on McHale. K.C. Jones, Jimmy Rodgers and Chris Ford work feverishly writing on a boarding pass the play they think will work in tonights game. Robert Parish attempts to get another twenty minute nap. And of course newspaper reading and autograph signing is a staple of road life. Because of their height basketball players stick out like a sore thumb at an airport. Probably one of the reasons that Bird, Parish and McHale usually sign the most autographs. Jerry Sichting, who just looks like another traveler on route to Butte Montana probably signs the fewest.

I wrote last week that Bird was the logical candidate to once again cop the MVP award. Well as he marches through the West, it has become a habit for the local newspaper writer enthrolled by his basketball antics to write the next morning that he is now one of the convinced...Bird is the Best.

Larry Bird Named Player of the Week

Larry Bird who averaged 32.3 points, 14.5 rebounds and eight assists per game to lead the Celtics to a 3-1 record, was named the Allstate/NBA player of the week for the week ending Sunday, February 16.

Bird's best game of the week came in a 120-119 overtime win at Portland when he tied his season-high of 47 points while adding 14 rebounds and 11 assists. Included in the 47-point effort was the basket to force overtime and a clutch foul line jumper with three seconds remaining in the extra period to win the game.

Bird started his week with 29 points, 11 rebounds and three assists in a 105-100 loss at Sacramento Tuesday, then had 31 points, 15 rebounds and 11 assists Thursday night when Boston defeated Seattle 107-98. After his outstanding performance against Portland, Bird finished off the week with 22 points, 18 rebounds and seven assists as Boston beat the defending world champion LA Lakers 105-99 on Sunday.

In winning Allstate/NBA player of the week honors, Bird beat out Isiah Thomas of Detroit, Rolando Blackman of Dallas, John Bagley of Cleveland, Wes Matthews of San Antonio, James Worthy of the LA Lakers and Charles Oakley of Chicago.

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The New England College Hoop Scene

By Rick Weitzman

For those of you who are absolute hoop fanatics and just can't get Celtics tickets, or the multitude of games on the tube just don't do it for you, there's still time to see a pretty good game close by. The local college season is winding down, but the action intensifies this time of year as tournament time arrives. Sure, the New England college crowds are not nearly as sophisticated as a Celts gathering (nor as large), but the games are fun and enthusiastic. What follows is a quick analysis of what you might see if you hit the local college trail.

BOSTON COLLEGE: The Big East is an extremely tough conference to compete in on a nightly basis and BC has taken its share of licks this year. The Eagles need more talent, more size, and more outside shooting to go with Dana Barros, probably the top frosh in the Big East. Roger McCready works as hard as anyone, but at 6'5 has trouble in amongst the trees. Troy Bowers has been a pleasant surprise, and Dom Pressley is as fast, end line to end line, as any player in the country. It's difficult to scout a team that plays BC because the Eagles are always able to take a team out of what it likes to do. That is a sincere compliment to Gary Williams.

PROVIDENCE COLLEGE: Also in the Big East and needs more talent. The best word to describe their style is frantic. They press all over the place and take it right to you. Rick Pitino has done a top notch job and will get players to go along with Billy Donovan, Dave Kipfer, and Steve Wright. He already exacts as much out of his players as possible.

UCONN: Another team in need of talent to survive in the Big East. Earl Kelley is a quality point guard, Tim Coles devours the boards, and Phil Gamble is a freshman worth keeping an eye on. The team blows hot and cold, and can make things very interesting when they're on.

NORTHEASTERN: Good talent here and the class of the North Atlantic Conference. The Huskies (my alma mater, by the way) may be the only New England entry in the NCAA tourney. They feature Reggie Lewis, a blue chip scoring dervish, Andre LeFleur, a solid point guard, John Williams, ex of Don Bosco H.S. and Kevin McDuffie, a brute inside. NU runs from the word "go" and always rebounds very well despite their lack of overall size.

BOSTON UNIVERSITY: Mike Jarvis has already brought some stability to a program that seems to go through coaches much like the Yankees. The Terriers have produced wins by playing strong defense and riding the scoring of sophomore Drederick Irving. It's a show just to see his free throw shooting style. Tom Ivey and Paul Hendricks, an Eddie Murphy lookalike, are board-banging veterans. Jarvis has already earned his keep by pointing this program in the right direction.

Williams: Best Coach

McCready: Hard Worker

UMASS: This team labors in relative obscurity (so what else is new?) but it plays a pretty tough schedule. They're young so they're taking some beatings, but if Lorenzo Sutton, Carl Smith, Duane Chase and company can hang in there, they can make some people around here notice them next year.

HOLY CROSS: After all the problems with this team a year ago, it seemed as if George Blaney's crew was going to put it all together this year. They started out that way, then flashy guard Jim McCaffery got hurt, and the Crusaders started to fade. They're well coached, work real hard, but their fortunes rest with McCaffery and he's been sporadic. They do have some good young kids.

HARVARD: Peter Roby has his work cut out for him. Recruiting is obviously tough and he has to get more horses. With Joe Carrabino and Bob Ferry graduated, and Arne Duncan taking the year off, there were big shoes to fill and they have a long way to go.

UNH: Another team that labors in obscurity. Gerry Friel gets a lot out of what he's got up there, but they're just not real mobile. Dirk Koopman and Ted DiGrande will fight you for everything.

MAINE: This club, behind Rich Henry, can sneak up on you if you're not careful. Skip Chappell makes sure his troops take advantage of everything given by their opponents.

MERRIMACK: A solid Division 2 team. Tim Lewis, Tom Hart, and Kevin Lahiff lead this crew and they play well together.

SPRINGFIELD: Another solid Division 2. Ivan Oliveras, who averages about 27 ppg and allegedly never saw a shot he didn't like, can play. He's 6'5 and does a lot of things on the court. Elzy Tubbs can also play.

I know I've missed some teams and I apologize for that so if you follow the fortunes of **UVM, Brown, Tufts, UMass-Boston, Salem State, New Hampshire College, or Hartford** (watch out for them in the future) I know you've been watching some pretty good hoop.

My choices for the best in New England?

BEST PLAYER: Reggie Lewis. He's got all the offensive tools and the rest of his game has improved each year. Jack Grinold, set aside the seats for the NBA scouts next year. Roger McCready, Earl Kelley, and Jim McCaffery deserve consideration also.

BEST COACH: Gary Williams. It's been a difficult year but he consistently gets more out of his kids than you'd expect. Rick Pitino and Mike Jarvis have also done excellent jobs, so this was a tough choice.

BEST TEAM: Northeastern. Inconsistent at times, but they have the best talent and deliver when they have to. It's too bad they don't play BC this year, that would have been a game to see. Keep this in mind, they're all underclassmen.

MOST IMPROVED TEAM: A tie. Providence and Boston University. Both teams have surprised some people and both programs are finally headed in the right direction.

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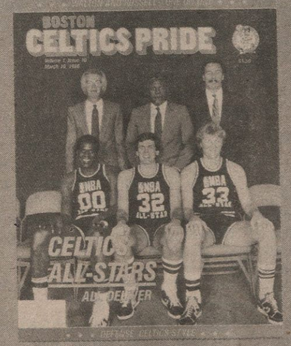

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John Havlicek: Revisited

By Glenn Rifkin

John Havlicek takes a feed from Rick Carlisle and pops in a short half hook shot. He breaks back on defense, grabs the rebound off an errant shot and heads back upcourt, sweat patterns appearing on the green Celtics practice jersey.

No, this is not an apparition or a scene from a locally produced Amazing Stories. Hondo has not returned to the Celtics roster, he is merely running in a light practice with the team, a habit he has not been able to break in the eight years since he retired.

At 46, Hall of Famer Havlicek still sports the slender athletic body and strong legs which made him one of the game's greatest players for 16 years as a Celtic. Except for a graying at the temples, the man appears ready to suit up for yet one more season.

But Havlicek's era is history and he knows it. He now watches with more than passing interest as Larry Bird picks up where he left off and proceeds to break most of Hondo's team records. In June, it will be 10 years since Havlicek last tasted championship champagne. In a recent interview, he talked about his storied career and his favorite team.

"Hondo": No regrets

It's been 10 years since the 1976 NBA championship victory over Phoenix. How does that team compare to this year's team?

This year's team is a lot deeper than the team we had and they particularly have a lot more size up front. Our '76 team was not a very big team at all. We had Dave Cowens who couldn't even be a power forward on this team with the size of the people. We also had Paul Silas and Don Nelson and Jo Jo White. This team is much bigger and deeper. The game has progressed so much that when I first came into the league there were only three 6'5" guards. Now you have three 6'8" guards and a number of 6'5" people. This club has a very good chance of winning it this year. They improved themselves in the off season and have a lot more depth than in the past.

How would this team rate among the all-time great Celtics teams?

It's hard to compare them because you are talking years and the game has improved so much. But the first teams I played on-- '63, '64, '65-- were the best teams I played on as a member of the Celtics. Our '68 and '69 championship teams were good but not as good as the ones prior to that. And consequently, you measure the greatness of a team by the number of championships it wins because everything else is irrelevant.

The league back then wasn't as strong as it is now. You only had nine teams so you probably had better ballplayers concentrated on nine teams. If you took nine teams today and concentrated the talent today, you'd have nine superpowers. So it's relative and it's hard to judge and measure.

From the '70s to now, we have taller athletes but are there any other significant differences?

I don't think the players of the '70s and '80s are as fundamental as the players of the '60s. The attributes they have physically today are far superior to what they used to be and consequently they get away with a lot more. But when you get into championship rounds and finals, it all boils down to the basics. The team that makes the fewest mistakes and is able to keep the other team from getting cheap baskets is the one that's going to win. So it boils down to fundamentals. But even though the players may not play with the same mental attitude, they can make up for it with their physical attributes.

What would John Havlicek be like in his prime in 1986?

I probably would have had to change somewhat because the ballhandling and the types of moves people make today are not what they made in the past. Had I played in the 80s, I would have developed some of those things. Anyone who went between their legs or behind their backs was more or less a showboat. Now, that's a standard part of the game. It's good for entertainment and spectators and the name of the game is to put people in the stands and entertain. We're entertainers. You, of course, want to provide a winning attitude too.

If you look at the great players, I don't think many of them have been that flashy. That trend is starting to change but it's taken 20 years for that to happen. If you look at Oscar Robertson or Jerry West, they were not flashy players. But you look at Magic Johnson or Dr. J., they are more flashy. That's how times have progressed. Who knows how it will be in the '90s and beyond.

Do you wish you had stuck with it another two years to get to play with Bird?

That would have been a very good opportunity for me to still play because I wouldn't have had to do as much and I could have still been effective. That's the nature of the Celtics. When I was a younger player, Frank Ramsey was in the twilight of his career and he said, "I'm really glad you're here because you're going to prolong my career a little bit. I won't be asked to do as much." That's the way it would have worked if Larry Bird had come along a year sooner. But I didn't want to play on the type of team we had (in 1978). I couldn't see anything happening in the near future and I didn't want to put myself through another dismal year like we had in my final year.

Did you regret not waiting when you saw Bird come in?

No, not really. I used to work out with the team when Bird got here and Bill Fitch commented that I could still play and why didn't I consider coming back. But that would have been very difficult because once you make a decision, I think you should stay with it. Sometimes you may regret it, but I didn't regret my decision.

What thoughts go through your mind when you watch a Celtics game now? Was that the best time of your life?

I really don't think that was the best part of my life because I've enjoyed all of my life. That was just one of the segments that allowed me to be in an unusual position. When I retired, I had no regrets, no anxieties. I just moved on to the next phase of life because there were business and other opportunities coming my way and that's why I made the transition so well.

When I was a young player, everyone had a summer job. Whereas today, with the amounts of money they are making, they don't need that type of thing. Consequently in the summer, I was always looking forward to doing other things and when I left the program.

What are you doing now?

I have three Wendy's restaurants. Plus I'm a spokesperson for about three of four companies in Boston, doing public relations. I also do a lot of freelance speaking appearances.

Have you given any thought to coaching?

No, I never gave any thought to it because I was probably as tough a person on myself as anyone could ever be. It would be very difficult for me to see some of the things going on today because I don't know if today's athlete dedicates himself as much. Sure, there are some that are really dedicated but others seem to have a certain amount of ability and they don't get the most out of it. That would probably bug me. I have no desire to coach. You have to be on the road for days and months and I had enough of that. I still travel frequently but I wouldn't want to make a lifestyle of being on the road the second half of my life.

When you look back, what are your fondest memories of being a Celtic?

It's hard to pinpoint one particular situation because I was part of so many great things. Winning the first championship (in 1963) is always a great thrill. In '65, stealing the ball. Winning it in 1969 when we were an underdog and down to Philly 3-1 and the Lakers 2-1 and came back and won. In '74, winning it for the first time without Bill Russell. We were underdogs to the Bucks with Kareem and I had a few great games in that series. In '76, the triple OT game stands out in my mind. There have been a lot of them and for me to pinpoint one is hard.

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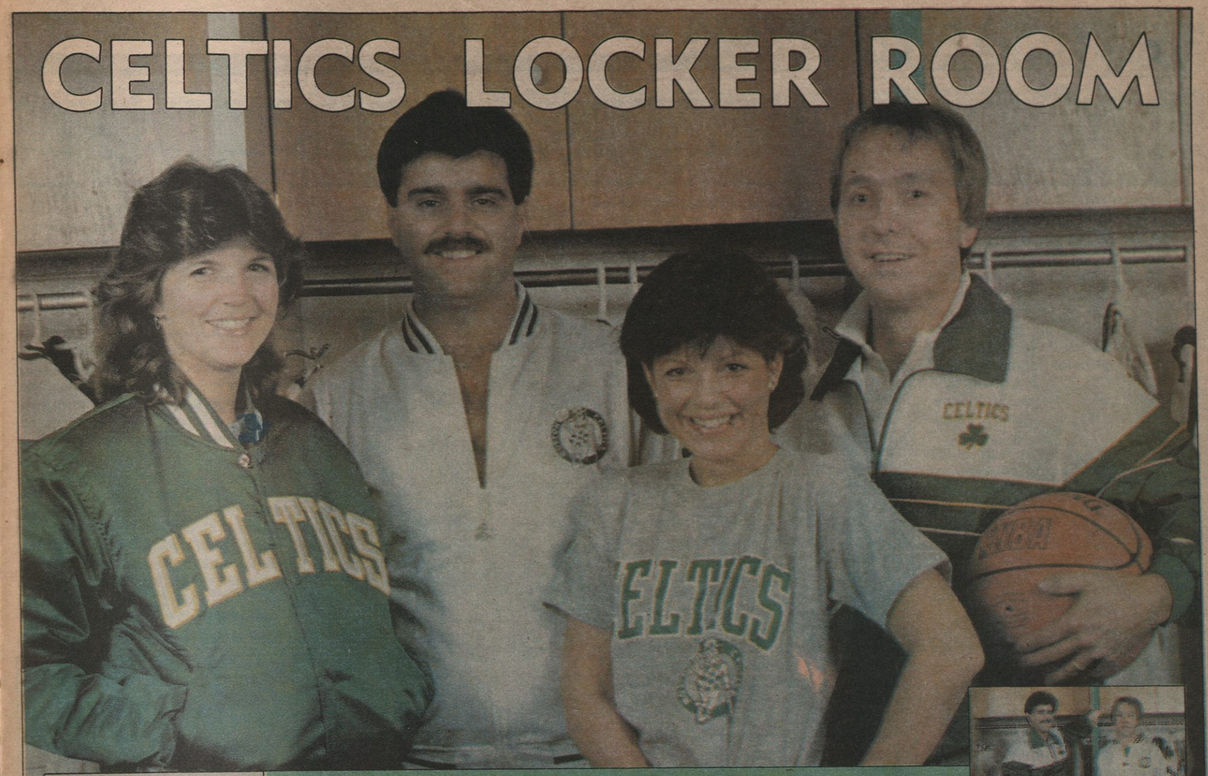

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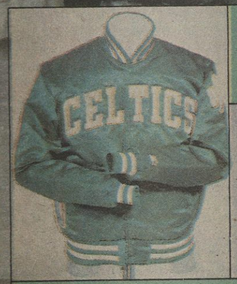

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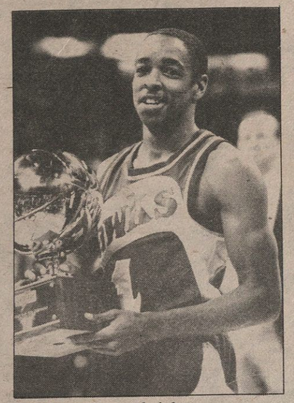
NBA Notebook

By Terry Lyons

WHEN **Spud Webb,** the 5-7 guard of the Atlanta Hawks, rose to new heights to win the 1986 Gatorade Slam-Dunk Championship at Dallas' Reunion Arena on Feb. 8, he proved once again that the NBA's rookie class of 1985-86 is a lot more than just **Patrick Ewing.** "He did some stuff out there that was amazing for anybody his size," said Indiana's **Terence Stansbury.** "The kid can play," said Atlanta assistant coach **Willis Reed.** "No question about it. He's got to continue to make them respect his jumper so he can create doubt in the mind of the defensive man."...One rookie who has clearly put doubt in defenses around the NBA is Seattle's **Xavier McDaniel** who combines with center Jack Sikma to form one of the toughest scoring and rebounding duos in the league. "He's just relentless on the offensive boards," said Seattle Coach **Bernie Bickerstaff** of the X-Man (a name tagged by McDaniel's grandmother). "You don't teach guys to go to the offensive boards. They either have it or they don't. He's going to be able to carry his own weight because he works at it," said Bickerstaff ... Another prize in the 1985 NBA Draft was **Karl Malone** of Utah. Malone was drafted at the 13th overall position in the first round -- a lucky 13! "Going to Utah gave me the opportunity to play," said Malone, trying to explain his success. "If any other team in front of Utah had taken me, I might not be playing as much."... When the Indiana Pacers made **Wayman Tisdale** the second player chosen in the 1985 draft, they knew they were getting a player with great potential. Tisdale missed training camp as his contract was finalized but has adjusted well since. "You have to remember, he's a rookie trying to play at a new position," said Indiana Coach **George Irvine,** explaining Tisdale's need to face the basket as a pro forward. "He has to develop his outside game."... And, as long as were talking about outside game, we should mention one rookie with the potential to master the outside game and that's Golden State's **Chris Mullin.** "I'm still doing some shooting in my spare time," said Mullin. "I want to keep getting better. My shots haven't been falling. The only way to do it is to keep working." Some might say that **Patrick Ewing** was the only "impact" player of the draft. But one look at Washington's 7-6 rookie center **Manute Bol** and you'll agree there's more than one player making his impact on the league Bol is leading the NBA in blocked shots and that's a category coaches often relate to effect on a game. "Manute is a force," said Boston Coach **K.C. Jones.** "You have to realize that every shot he blocks costs two points. Sure, they play basically with four men on offense, but they have six on defense!" ... Another rookie who has gained attention because of his defensive skill is Detroit's **Joe Dumars.** "He has a chance to become a really fine NBA basketball player," said Detroit GM **Jack McCloskey** of the first-round pick. "He handles the ball well and can score. He's an excellent passer, he's a competitor and he's a defender."

* * * * *

Chicago Bulls guard **Michael Jordan** received another set-back after the All-Star break when he learned his injured left foot will need additional healing time. Jordan will continue light workouts which include shooting and jumping with intense training of walking and running in water. "It's funny," said Bulls broadcaster **Johnny Kerr,** "This year Michael's running in water. Last year he was walking on top of it."... When the Celtics and Lakers both lost on Tuesday, Feb. 11, it marked the first time both teams lost on the same day in the regular season in more than a year.



Spud rose to new heights

The last time it happened was Jan. 30, 1985 ... New Jersey's **Darryl Dawkins** can't understand his NBA statistics. "I keep looking in the *NBA Guide*," says Dawkins, "and I don't have 10,000 points yet. They must be taking points away."... Utah GM/Coach **Frank Layden** wants to see Salt Lake City's pro hockey club get through some rough times. The Jazz coach recently gave Salt Lake Eagles owner **Art Teece** a personal check for $5,000. "Imagine that," said Teece to Deseret News sports editor **Lee Benson.** "The coach of the other pro sport in town wants you to make it, and cares that much. I think you have to go through a lot of cities before you find that kind of situation...and through a lot of people."

* * * * *

The Philadelphia 76ers gave the late **Dave Zinkoff** a fitting salute on Wednesday, Feb. 12, when they raised a banner to the rafters of the Spectrum in honor of the longtime P.A. announcer. The Sixers held a pregame ceremony for "The Zink" and distributed a commemorative color photo of the man who touched so many lives throughout the sports world... The Indiana Pacers had a special promotion to honor **Martin Luther King Jr.** as America celebrated a national holiday on his birthday. The Pacers donated $1 to a local minority group for every walk-up ticket sold for their game vs. Detroit on Jan. 20 ... **Alex English** of the Nuggets was honored as Colorado Pro Athlete of the Year at a dinner sponsored by the Denver Chamber of Commerce on Feb. 17. An award was presented by Denver Coach **Doug Moe...** LA Lakers Coach **Pat Riley** was ejected from a recent game for the first time since he's become head coach of the Lakers back on Nov. 19, 1981. "There's no popcorn in the lockerroom, no beer, no anything," said Riley. "It's lousy."... Riley might like the cooking a little better in Atlanta. That's where Hawks forward **Antoine Carr** is whipping up a storm after he remembered a few Italian recipes taught to him during his one-year stint in Europe. Carr baked some lasagna and manicotti for Hawks front office staff members who reportedly cleaned it up in less than 15 minutes. Since the "Galloping Gourmet" is a thing of the past, the Hawks' staff is campaigning for a new show entitled "The Dunking Chef."... The Sacramento Kings are still going strong in their new hometown. At a recent United Cerebral Palsy fund raiser, the Kings offered an autographed team basketball for auction. The bidding started at $25 but ended two hours later with a top bid of $1,875 going to charity.

They Said It — At The All-Star Game

"When I was a kid, I never dreamed in my life that I would be out on the court playing with the greatest players in the world and be named the best player on the floor that day. For that to happen twice, it's like heaven."

— Isiah Thomas, Detroit Pistons and All-Star Game MVP

"This was the weekend of the brilliant and the short people. I was brilliant and the rest of the people were short."

— Larry Bird, Boston Celtics

"What we saw today (in Spud Webb) was basketball's answer to the Refrigerator."

— Tom Heinsohn, CBS commentator

"Basketball players are the best athletes in the world. I'm in the best shape of my life when I play basketball. I think Spud is a remarkable athlete. I can barely touch the net and he can dunk!"

— Martina Navratilova, tennis star and Slam Dunk judge

"Nobody comes to this game to go through the motions. NBA players have a lot of pride and winning is the most important part of coming to this game."

— Robert Parish, Boston Celtics

"Everybody in middle America identifies with Larry. Inner-city kids identify with Isiah and Magic. Middle-aged people identify with Kareem. Now look at Spud. He gives everyone who is short an incentive to live...which they need."

— Kevin McHale, Boston Celtics

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Kevin McHale

Kevin McHale recounts his play on injured Achilles tendon after the All-Star Game: "I got really tired. It tightened up, but I guess I'm going to have to deal with that the rest of the year."

K.C. Jones, Coach of the East All-Star Team, discusses Robert Parish's limited minutes in that game: "Robert told me before the game to let the young guys go after the win. He just said to give him five or six minutes and he'd be happy. I needed to hear that because it's tough to find minutes for all these guys."

K.C. Jones

Bill Walton

Bill Walton on why he loves the game: "I love playing in the games. Even the practices are fun. Basketball is a perfect game as far as I'm concerned. It has got everything, even contact, but its object isn't to hurt the other guy.

Isiah Thomas describes how he and Larry Bird play together, after the All-Star Game: "What a pleasure to play alongside Larry. It's just so enjoyable. He's a guy who probably works on his game as hard as I do. And reads things just as I would read them. Pass, cut, layup. When Magic and I get together during the summer it's the same incredible chemistry, the same fun."

Isiah Thomas

By The Numbers --- January 27 — February 11

The Celtics stretched a league-high winning streak to 13 before finally faltering in Sacramento, 105-100, in the first game after the All-Star break, February 11. The latter marked the beginning of the team's seven-game road swing through the west.

A fundamental reason for the streak was the team defense, necessary because of the absence of Kevin McHale, who missed all but a fraction of one game (although McHale did play in the All-Star Game). The C's held their opponents to an average of 94.3 ppg; in the sole loss, Sacramento scored 105.

The Celtics improved their road mark to 16-8 during their winning skein, their best streak since they won 18, a club record, in 1981-82.

Despite missing McHale, the shooting and offensive thrust remained in the front court. Bird led the team in field goals attempted (109), Parish in Field Goal Percentage (46-83, .552). Ainge continues to handle the ball more; he trailed DJ in assists, but played less minutes (209 to 195).

Larry Bird. Probably his best shooting of the season came in the 3 Point Field Goal Contest in Dallas; the super player scorched 11 straight 3-point FGs to capture the crown. It was an extension of his play in regular season matches; he averaged 23.5 ppg and had two (statistically) superior games. 26 points, 16 rebounds vs. Bullets, Feb. 5; 22 points, 11 rebounds, 5 steals and defensive stopper against Seattle's McDaniel, Feb. 2.

Kevin McHale. Plagued with Achilles tendon injury, "pain he will have to tolerate all season," according to Dr. Tom Silva, Team Physician. In 1 game, scored all 6 FGA to spark team to Feb. 4 win in Milwaukee. In All-Star game McHale scored 8 with 10 rebounds and 4 blocks in 20 minutes.

Robert Parish. Minutes are down, but that's all. Playing some of the best center in the league. 22 points, 16 rebounds, 2 blocks vs. Bulls; 16 points 14 rebounds vs. Bullets, Jan. 31; 19 points, 15 rebounds at Sacramento.

Dennis Johnson. Averaged 12 ppg with 6.7 assists despite 0-0 from field against Bullets, Feb. 5. 24 points, 7 assists, 2 blocks vs. Seattle; 20 points, 8 assists, 5 rebounds, 2 steals vs. Chicago; 19 points, 5 assists, 4 rebounds vs. Sacramento.

Scott Wedman. Sustained point production from talent-laden front court. Averaged 16.2 ppg in 30 minutes per game action. Indication of output: took same number of shots as Parish (83, tallying 42). Scored in double figures every game with top effort Jan. 31st at Washington: 24 points, 9 rebounds, 3 blocks, 1 steal.

Bill Walton. Chasing his 2nd NBA crown. 21 minutes per game, and led team with 11 blocked shots. Top statistical effort: 13 points, 17 rebounds in 28 minutes in Feb. 5 game vs. Bullets. Significantly, this was the night following 12 point, 7 rebound, 2 block effort in Milwaukee, Feb. 4.

Jerry Sichting. Remains a consistent, effective, quick player off bench. Played 17.7 minutes per game. Best efforts, like Walton, were in back-to-back games at Milwaukee and in Boston vs. Bullets. Kept passing game attacking and scoring 4 with 5 assists in Milwaukee; 9 points, 2 assists, 2 rebounds vs. Bullets. 11 points, 3 assists vs. Seattle.

David Thirdkill. Thirdkill continues to be resiliant, consistent performer off the bench. A swing man, his role seems to be as big guard on defense, and small forward on offense. 12.3 minutes per game, averaged 3.9 ppg and gathered in 12 rebounds. Best efforts were 9 point, 4 rebound, 1 block game in 18 minutes vs. Seattle and 6 point, 2 rebound game in 15 minutes against Sacramento.

Rick Carlisle. His coming off the bench and provided continuity to offense and consistent effort on defense. Averaged 10 minutes per game, 2 points. Best games were against Washington (Jan. 31st game) and Seattle. Against Bullets, 4 points, 4 assists, 2 rebounds in 13 minutes. In comeback win over Sonics, 2 for 2 from field in 6 minutes with assist and rebound during team's second quarter rally.

Sam Vincent. Has struggled to retain playing form after Jan. 15 injury against Denver, which forced him to miss two games. In 6 games, he played 21 minutes. Best effort was his appearance in Sacramento when he contributed to team's futile attempt to catch the Kings, who had spurted to 81-60 lead at the end of three quarters. Played 6 minutes, scored 2, grabbed 2 rebounds, and made 1 steal. According to Bob Cousy, Vincent needs to pass and set up the offense before looking for his own shot.

Greg Kite. Kite played some of his best minutes of the season. Played 31 minutes in 5 games, shooting 2-8 from the field with 4 rebounds. More importantly, he picked up team defense in Washington, January 31, blocking a shot, scoring 2, and pulling down three rebounds. Against Seattle, Kite again lifted the team, playing 5 minutes and providing relief as team mounted rally from 47-26 deficit.

WON 41, LOST 9

BOSTON CELTICS STATISTICS

As of February 16

PLAYER	G	GS	MIN	-FIELD GOALS- FG	FGA	PCT	3-PT. FG FG	FGA	-FREE THROWS- FT	FTA	PCT	--REBOUNDS-- OFF	DEF	TOT	AST	PF	DQ	STL	TO	BLK	PTS	AVG	HI
BIRD	50	50	1941	468	999	.468	37	97	275	307	.896	127	369	496	322	117	0	112	172	34	1248	25.0	47
MCHALE	40	39	1513	340	616	.552	0	0	209	267	.783	106	244	350	120	116	2	19	86	77	889	22.2	34
PARISH	50	50	1610	322	594	.542	0	0	160	223	.717	157	297	454	89	139	2	46	119	79	804	16.1	27
JOHNSON	47	47	1654	295	631	.468	4	23	151	181	.834	41	120	161	260	128	2	71	95	14	745	15.9	30
AINGE	48	47	1505	218	416	.524	14	46	68	75	.907	26	132	158	280	132	3	71	88	6	518	10.8	26
WEDMAN	50	11	860	186	396	.470	11	32	30	50	.600	36	86	122	47	85	0	26	32	17	413	8.3	24
WALTON	49	0	927	142	266	.534	0	0	71	105	.676	89	222	311	86	131	1	27	92	64	355	7.2	19
SICHTING	50	6	962	127	236	.538	2	7	38	40	.950	16	51	67	119	79	0	36	52	0	294	5.9	17
THIRDKILL	26	0	237	35	67	.522	0	1	28	50	.560	18	26	44	8	34	0	5	13	2	98	3.8	20
VINCENT	36	0	289	32	99	.323	1	3	25	39	.897	5	27	32	54	42	0	13	37	4	100	2.8	9
CARLISLE	45	0	417	53	109	.486	0	5	12	17	.706	8	30	38	64	49	0	11	26	1	118	2.6	10
KITE	37	0	181	17	37	.459	0	0	5	9	.556	9	28	37	8	37	1	2	13	8	39	1.1	8
CELTICS	50		12150	2240	4487	.499	69	218	1089	1375	.792	645	1640	2285	1459	1104	11	440	842	307	5638	112.8	137
OPPONENTS	50		12150	2104	4531	.464	45	174	990	1311	.755	663	1471	2134	1181	1221	9	435	838	215	5243	104.9	124

MARCH

HOME AND AWAY SCHEDULE...
Home Games

BOSTON CELTICS

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
2 DETROIT PISTONS 2:00 WRKO RADIO SPORTS CHANNEL	3	4 CHICAGO BULLS 8:30 WRKO RADIO WLVI-TV56	5 CHICAGO BULLS 7:30 WRKO RADIO SPORTS CHANNEL	6	7 NEW YORK KNICKERBOCKERS 7:30 WRKO RADIO SPORTS CHANNEL	8 WASHINGTON BULLETS 7:30 WRKO RADIO WLVI-TV56
9	10 DALLAS MAVERICKS 8:00 WRKO RADIO WLVI-TV56	11 HOUSTON ROCKETS 8:30 WRKO RADIO WLVI-TV56	12	13 SAN ANTONIO SPURS 8:30 WRKO RADIO WLVI-TV56	14 Atlanta Hawks 7:30 WRKO RADIO WLVI-TV56	15
16 PHILADELPHIA 76ers 1:00 WRKO RADIO SPORTS CHANNEL	17	18 CLEVELAND CAVALIERS 7:30 WRKO RADIO SPORTS CHANNEL	19 INDIANA PACERS 7:30 WRKO RADIO SPORTS CHANNEL	20	21 CHICAGO BULLS 7:30 WRKO RADIO SPORTS CHANNEL	22
23	24 HOUSTON ROCKETS 8:00 WRKO RADIO SPORTS CHANNEL	25	26 MILWAUKEE BUCKS 7:30 WRKO RADIO SPORTS CHANNEL		28 WASHINGTON BULLETS 7:30 WRKO RADIO SPORTS CHANNEL	29
30 NEW JERSEY NETS 1:00 WRKO RADIO SPORTS CHANNEL	31					

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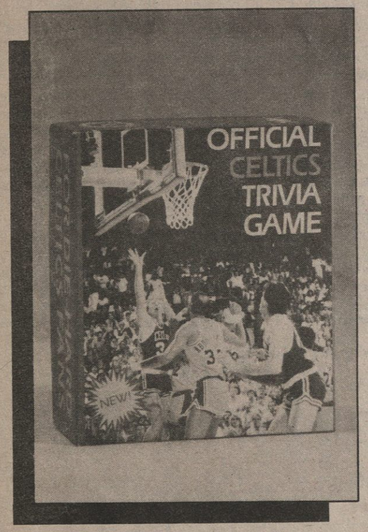

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1. Who was the first Celtics T.V. announcer?
2. As head coach of the Celtics, what was Red Auerbach's fourth quarter tradition if his team was winning?
3. Which Celtic slept on a bench in the Boston Commons after winning the 1974 NBA Championship?
4. In 1980 two Celtics retired from basketball – a center and a guard. The center was Dave Cowens. Who was the guard?
5. Who said "I could take 4 guys off the street in Petersburg (Virginia) and beat them (the Celtics)"?
6. Who said, "I'm going to look awfully silly...if he stuffs the ball and *me* through the hoop!"

1. Les Smith
2. Light a cigar
3. Dave Cowens
4. Pete Maravich
5. Moses Malone
6. Bill Russell about Wilt Chamberlain

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Basketball Times — College Insight

By Larry Donald

In my lifetime there have been two basketball coaches at Ohio State University, **Fred Taylor** and **Eldon Miller.** Both were not only masters at their craft, but complete gentlemen as well. A credit to the game. At the same time the Buckeyes have had a like number of football coaches, **Woody Hayes** and **Earl Bruce.** It's my opinion that Hayes was a vastly overrated tactician and one of the most boorish men college athletics has ever endured. Interestingly, Taylor and Miller were fired while Hayes has a Columbus roadway named in his honor. What that says is during the past two decades Ohio State University is a classic example of what's wrong about college athletics. Perspective here has been tied exclusively to the won-lost mark and for a university with a great academic reputation that's unfortunate...

Making a call on **Brad Daugherty's** NBA future has to be a frightening prospect for even the savviest of scouts, but this year there's been no more efficient player in college basketball than the North Carolina center. In **Dean Smith's** scheme, Daugherty's always just where he's supposed to be...The nation's top point producer this season is Wagner's **Terrance Bailey,** a 6-2 guard. Is he for real? Ex-NBA guard **Kevin Porter** (now coaching at St. Francis in Pennsylvania) says Bailey's good enough to help the Knicks "right now." With another season, Bailey may move up on a lot of lists...

Speculation season, usually blooming in March, has come early this year. Never have so many prime positions in the college coaching ranks been open all at once, leading off with the aforementioned Ohio State vacancy. I'm convinced the OSU post is one of the Big Ten's three best because of the proximity to great high school talent. And if you want to pan Miller for not tapping that vast mine of nearby skilled schoolboys, fine. Just don't suggest his record isn't a creditable one. Anyhow, the early speculation in Columbus centered around Buckeye alums like **Bobby Knight** and **Don DeVoe.** There's a feeling Knight may need a change of pace after so many great years at Indiana and DeVoe has a long track record of coaching success at Virginia Tech, Wyoming and currently Tennessee. I doubt either will make the move, however. My prediction is someone like SMU's **Dave Bliss.** He's put together two programs (Oklahoma and SMU) in tough circumstances plus has a great many midwestern ties from his days as an assistant to Knight...

What's the big difference without **Patrick Ewing** in the Georgetown center spot this year? "People talk about Patrick's shot blocking, but he was more valuable to us on the floor than in the air," says coach **John Thompson.** "His range of coverage was so deep he could cover up mistakes not only under the basket, but on the perimeter."...

I don't care if they do have 64 spots available, the NCAA Division I Tournament Committee will have the most difficult task ever when trying to put together this year's field. There are so many teams on the fringe, in that 16-to-19-game win circle. Number 65 is certain to cry loudly...Yes, he's a rookie, but as an announcer I like **Billy Cunningham.** The big thing he's been able to do on the ACC broadcasts is make everyone forget he was one of North Carolina's greatest players by producing some solid basketball insight...

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Celtics Classics

1963-64 Celtics Prove There's Life After Cousy

The Celtics, who had won the NBA championship in 1962-63, entered the following season with one thing in mind: to prove to the world that there was indeed life after Bob Cousy.

A playmaker deluxe, Cousy retired after the 62-63 season, thus concluding a brilliant 13-year career with the Celtics. In that span, Cousy was a member of six championship teams and led the NBA in assists eight times. Cousy also was Most Valuable player once.

Cousy had received his wish--an NBA title in his last year as a player, giving Boston five championships in a row. But would the Celtics miss the beat with Cousy no longer wheeling and dealing?

With Cousy gone, the C's lineup consisted of K.C. and Sam Jones at guard, Bill Russell at center and Tom Heinsohn and Tom Sanders at forward. When first-year Celtics Willie Naulls replaced Heinsohn on the floor, it gave the Celtics an all-black five. No other team in the NBA had dared do that before.

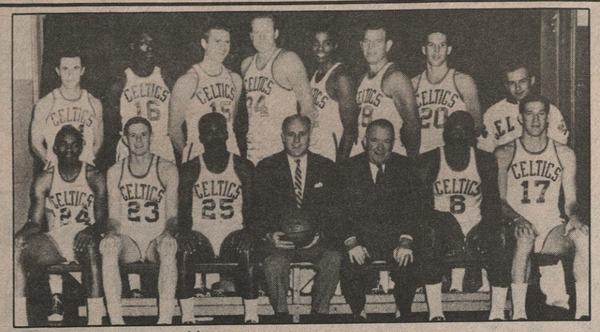
"It was no big deal," Red Auerbach said. "I didn't even think about it at the time. I just did it. There was no negative reaction by anyone around the league."

Boston didn't react negatively to being without Cousy during the regular season, winning the Eastern Division crown with a sparkling 59-21 record. The Celtics were four games ahead of the tough Cincinnati Royals, which featured Oscar Robertson, Jerry Lucas and Wayne Embry, the latter of whom would join the Celtics down the road.

In the playoffs, the Celtics had a bye in the opening round and watched the Royals dispose of the Philadelphia 76ers, It wasn't easy for Cincinnati, which took the final game of a five-game set, 130-124, to earn the right to face the C's for the Division crown.

Seemingly, the Royals would have the edge going into the series. In 12 regular-season games with Boston, Cincinnati came out on top seven times. However, the Royals were no match for Boston this time around.

The Celtics opened the finals with a resounding 103-87 victory at the Garden, won again at the Garden, this time by 11, in the second game, went to Cincinnati and took the third game by 10 points. The Royals finally righted themselves with a 102-93 win at Cincinnati Garden in game four.



In 63-64, they had something to prove

The series moved back to the Garden for the fifth game, and the Celtics settled the issue with a 109-95 triumph, thus eliminating Cincinnati in five games.

Meanwhile, in the Western Division, the St. Louis Hawks knocked off the Lakers in the semis, but where turned back by the San Francisco Warriors in the finals.

The Warriors' regular-season mark of 48-32 paled in comparison to Boston's gaudy log, but they would nevertheless have to be taken seriously. Afterall, the transplanted Philadelphians had one tall person named Wilt Chamberlain, who averaged a mere 36.9 points, 22.3 rebounds and 5.0 assists a game, playing nearly every minute of every single contest. Forward Tom Meschery was also a capable player, and San Francisco had a talented point guard in Guy Rodgers.

In eight games during the year, the Celtics won five times. But again, they overmatched their playoff opponent.

Boston came away with a 108-96 triumph in the series opener at the Garden, and clobbered the Warriors, 124-101 in the second game. Game three saw the series move to California, with the Warriors responding with a 115-91 win. However, Boston took a 3-1 lead in the fourth game, squeezing out a 98-95 decision.

In fitting fashion, the Celtics sealed up another NBA crown by winning the fifth game in Boston, 105-99. A balanced attack for the Celtics did it, as five players scored in double-figures. Heinsohn led the way with 19 points, and Frank Ramsey and Sam Jones added 18 apiece. Russell and John Havlicek hit 14 each, and Sanders 11. Russell cleared the glass for 26 rebounds.

Boston's sixth straight world championship bested professional sports records for supremacy set by the New York Yankees and the Montreal Canadiens.

That fact probably went unnoticed to several Celtics players. What was the key was showing they could win without Cousy.

"Everyone was wondering what would happen to us without Cousy," Auerbach said. "You don't lose the greatest playmaker of all time without missing him. We came into camp that fall after reading all summer about the fall of the Celtics dynasty.

"I think we won in 1963 because it was Bob's last season and I think we won in 1964 because we were playing without Bob. We had something to prove."

Cousy's absence did change the complexion of the team. Boston was less crisp offensively without Cousy's deft passes, and defense, a focal point in the Celtics existence anyway, became even more critical.

"We changed our game and concentrated more on defense," Auerbach said. "We figured we'd have enough offense if we pitched in and helped Russell shut off the opposition."

And that formula worked to perfection.

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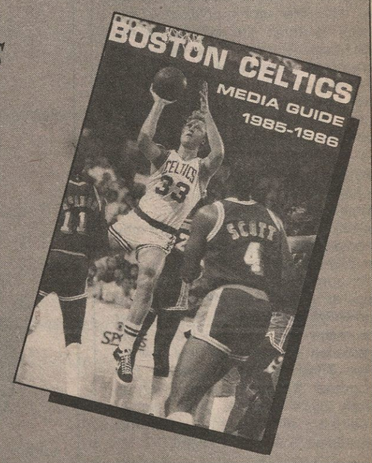

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Celtics Greats

Past and Present

Mel Counts

Two Years — Two Championships

Mel Counts' stint with the Boston Celtics wasn't a prolonged one. Drafted by the Celtics out of Oregon State in 1964, Counts played just two years with the club.

But that pair of seasons was profitable for the 7-foot center/forward. He picked up a championship ring each year, events which proved to be the highlights of his 11-year NBA career.

Counts, who later played with the Baltimore Bullets, Phoenix Suns, Los Angeles Lakers and New Orleans Jazz, is currently living on a five acre spread in Gervais, Ore. He's involved in many enterprises-- working for a real estate company, representing Shaklee Corp. He also runs a summer basketball camp with a local high school coach, Dick Patzer.

"That I used to be a player in the NBA has helped the camp," Counts says. "It's a day camp, and I try to make it affordable. In other areas, camps can run $200 a night. Here, a kid comes in from nine in the morning to four in the afternoon, and it's $75 a night. That's affordable for most people.

"We teach the kids fundamentals about basketball. We also try to teach them to love mom and dad and be responsible. It's a lot different than many other basketball camps. The kids get a lot of personalized attention."

Counts spends a lot of time paying attention to his two basketball playing sons, Brett and Brian. Brett, a 6-9 frontcourter, is a junior at the University of Pacific in Stockton, Cal., a Division I school in the Pacific Coast Athletic Association. Brian is a freshman at Modesto (Cal.) Junior College, and expects to transfer to a four-year school in the near future.

Counts has noticed that there are few similarities between he and Brett as far as playing styles are concerned.

"Brett is a good defensive player, a good passer and a good rebounder, the elder Counts says. "He could do a little better in scoring. I was talking to one of the UOP assistant coaches, and he said Brett might have the quickest first step of any player in the league.

"His biggest weakness is his shooting. But he's a good kid. I enjoy him."

While Brett is looked upon as a defender, his dad was a scorer. In his playing days, Counts was probably the first 7-footer ever to spend nearly all of his time away from the basket.

"My thrust was scoring right through school (at Oregon State)," Counts says, "Brett is quicker and smarter than I was. He's ahead in knowing the game and what needs to be done. I was better offensively."

Mel made his time count

Counts averaged 6.7 points a game in his two Celtics seasons. He primarily served as a back-up to Bill Russell-- along with John Thompson-- and played forward as well.

Counts learned quite a bit about the art of playing the pivot from Russell.

"Russell was the name of the game," Counts says. "He was the player who made people realize how important defense was to a winning team."

Another Celtics who made an indelible impression on Counts was Red Auerbach, then the coach and general manager of the club.

"Auerbach, made the sixth man famous," Counts says. "He brought the importance of role players. For example, K.C. Jones played the tough defense and would take maybe four or five shots a night, while Sam Jones would take 20 shots a night, his job was offense.

"Red didn't make many trades. The Celtics got good players and stuck with them. They got the big guy (Russell) and built the team around him."

Boston may have made few swaps, but Counts found himself dealt to Baltimore for Bailey Howell prior to the start of the 1966-67 season. Counts caught wind of the trade from John Thompson, the current Georgetown boss who was Counts roommate when both were with the Celtics.

"I was in New York and I called John, who was living near Washington DC," Counts recalls. 'He told be I was going to be a neighbor of his . I said, 'Are you coming to Boston?' He said, 'No,. you've been traded to Baltimore."

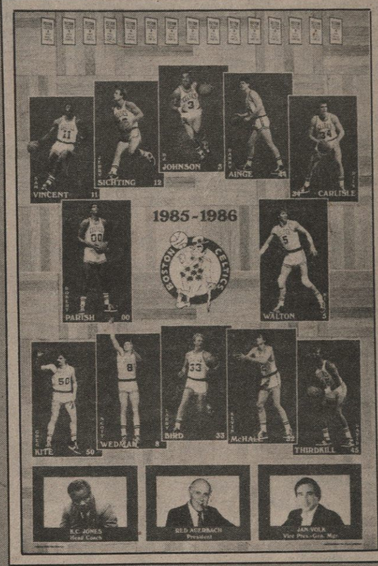
Counts didn't stay in Baltimore very long--only about four months. He was then dealt to the Lakers, where he later played with Wilt Chamberlain. Counts is the only player to have been a teammate of both Russell and Wilt.

Living so far away from Boston, Counts doesn't have much contact with the Celtics organization these days, although he remains friends with Hank Finkel and talks to him occasionally.

Despite that, there is still some Celtics blood flowing through Counts' veins.

"I'm very proud that I was on the team two years and we won two championships," Counts says, "I remember when I was drafted by the Celtics I was real happy. After being on winning teams in college, it was nice to go to another successful program, and have the opportunity to study and watch Bill Russell. I saw how the game should be played."

SPECIAL CELTICS POSTER



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